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*The
Proceedings of the Unitarian
Historical Society*

VOLUME X
PART I

*Unitarians and Socialistic Ideas in the
United States Prior to 1860*

John E. MacNab

Some English Dissenters and their American Friends

Anne Holt, M.A.
Fellow of the Royal Historical Society

Annual Meeting

1953

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The Proceedings
of the
Unitarian Historical Society

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The Society welcomes to its membership all who are in sympathy with its aims and work. Persons desiring to join will send the annual membership fee of Two Dollars, with their names and addresses, to the Treasurer, or Fifty Dollars for life membership. Each member receives a copy of the Proceedings. About 125 copies are sent to Libraries.

UNITARIANS AND SOCIALISTIC IDEAS
IN THE UNITED STATES
PRIOR TO 1860*

JOHN E. MACNAB

I

INTRODUCTION

The idea of an affinity between particular religious creeds and certain economic doctrines or practices is not a new one. Max Weber in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, and R. H. Tawney in his *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, have presented persuasive arguments indicating a relationship between the growth of capitalism and the development of Protestantism, proving, perhaps, not so much that Protestantism is a causal element but rather that it has been a propitious milieu in which the acquisitive and expanding aspects of capitalism have been most at home.¹

It was not, however, through the ideas of these two scholars that I was attracted to this problem, but rather through my own religious and economic experience, to which I gave expression as long as eighteen years ago in a brief paper entitled "Preparing Prosperity." Further experience and reflection tended to confirm and expand these early ideas. Roman Catholicism, with its authoritarian centralization, appears to lend itself logically to the development of an authoritarian state in which the economic aim is not that of individual acquisition of wealth but for the benefit of the state, which in the conception of a truly catholic religion is synonymous with the glory of God. On the other hand, there are the many Protestant groups whose ideas range widely in considering the degree to which religion is a direct matter between God and man, and in accepting or watering down the ethical ideas of the Nazarene teacher. Proportional to their emphasis of the former and their dilution of the latter the Protestant churches tend to encourage man not to hide his light under a bushel but to cast his bread upon the water and have it return tenfold without thought of the parable of the rich man and the camel. Politically, too, this affinity appears evident, church government by the laity leading to political government by the masses.

*This paper was originally prepared for a Seminar in Intellectual and Social History of the Modern World, under Professor Crane Brinton at Harvard University, Summer School 1951.

¹See also, Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*. 2 vols. Trans. by Olive Wyon. Philadelphia, 1949.

Consideration of this problem in the particular application which is being studied here came to my attention in much more recent years when I became acquainted with Unitarian ideas. Superficial consideration of Unitarian beliefs, as they might apply to economic, sociological and political concepts, points towards an anarchistic view of society — a society in which the wisdom and good of each dispenses with the need of government, in which the preeminence of the individual is given full reign. Both Jefferson and Emerson provide excellent examples of reaching this conclusion, a completely valid one as long as society is in a simple state. The Unitarian, however, applying his rational approach to the problem becomes aware that society is no longer a simple entity, but an ever increasing complexity. Regardless of how well-intentioned and how wise men may be they are prevented by the very grossness of mankind's relations from living peacefully and securely and justly. And, seeking to implement his belief in the brotherhood of man and a social gospel, he finds that there must be in both the political and economic fields an organized cooperative effort if injustice, insecurity and war are to be avoided.²

That specific Unitarians had come to this conclusion began to creep into my mind as I learned of their associations with Brook Farm and various other attempts to rectify the existing society in the middle part of the Nineteenth Century. A reading of John Quincy Adams' First Annual Address to Congress implanted this idea more firmly. To determine the validity or error of this idea is the basis of this study. Is there an affinity between Unitarian ideas and socialistic views? To obtain an answer to this, the method that appears most

²Compare the words of Rev. William Ellery Channing in a report to a committee of the American Unitarian Association, appointed to consider and report upon the Ministry at Large, quoted in W. H. Channing, *Life of William Ellery Channing* (Boston, 1880), p. 478: "It seems to me, that we understand better than most Christians that it is the object of our religion to establish a fraternal union among all classes of society, to break down our present distinctions, and to direct all the energies of the cultivated and virtuous to the work of elevating the depressed classes to an enlightened piety, to intellectual and moral dignity. To us, it seems to me, this great work peculiarly belongs . . .

"It seems that the signs of the times point to a *great approaching modification of society (sic)*, which will be founded on, and will express, the essential truth, that the chief end of the social state is the elevation of all its members as intelligent and moral beings, and under which every man will be expected to contribute to this object according to his ability. The present selfish, dissocial system must give way to Christianity, and I earnestly wish that we may bear our full part in effecting this best of all revolutions."

appropriate is to examine the ideas of a number of leading Unitarians, confining the area and period to the United States prior to the Civil War.

To avoid misunderstanding or confusion it is essential to define the main terms which are involved in this study and to present the setting within which they are being considered.

Socialism, as defined by *Webster's New International Dictionary* (1947), is "A political and economic theory of social organization based on collective or governmental ownership and democratic management of the essential means of production and distribution of goods; also, a policy or practice based on this theory."

It is well to keep in mind that in practice there are and have been a variety of examples of socialism, some of which would not come within the definition given by Webster. (National Socialism, for example, does not include the principle of democratic management, nor does Marxian socialism, in the sense that prevails in the United States.) Related to this study are three main types, all of a democratic nature. There is the communal type, which comes within the field of Utopian Socialism, and is typified by Brook Farm; there is Democratic Socialism, which is exemplified by the Labour parties of England, Australia or New Zealand, or the Socialist Party in the United States; and there is Christian Socialism, which in essence comes within the former but is narrower in definition through its conception of the necessity of transforming not only society but also the individual.

As far as the United States is concerned socialism in this period, socialism by name, is confined to the utopian communal experiments. Prior to 1858 there had been 130 such attempts since 1663, and half of these took place during 1840-1858. Most notable of them were the Rappites at Harmony, Indiana, and their successors, the Owenites; the Oneida, New York, settlement in 1847 of John Noyes, which lasted until 1880; and Brook Farm, which is directly concerned in this study.³

It is much more difficult to define the term "Unitarian," the nature of its belief defying any rigid conception whereby it can be said, this is it. Nevertheless for purposes of discussion a common agreement must be reached. Neither Webster nor the Oxford definition appears satisfactory, and therefore the following is offered: a rational

³Arthur E. Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias* (Philadelphia, 1950), pp. 238, 242.

and ethical religion, unbound by any required creed, but giving general affirmation to the doctrine of "the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the leadership of Jesus, salvation by character, and the progress of mankind onward and upward forever."⁴

Unitarian ideas in the United States appear to have first established a continuity in the period immediately preceding the American Revolution. In the 1780's the first congregation to accept that viewpoint did so by adopting a revision of the Prayer Book of the Church of England. This revision had been made chiefly through the influence of a Unitarian clergyman from England who visited the United States at this time and helped to establish contact between English Unitarians and a number of ministers in this country.

It was not, however, in the Church of England that the Unitarian view found its strength, but among the Congregational churches of New England. Many of these ministers preached the new ideas, but it was not until the third decade of the Nineteenth Century that they banded themselves together to form the American Unitarian Association. The period preceding this had been one of much controversy between the clergy retaining the trinitarian view and those who were adopting the unitarian. This controversial period provided considerable life to the new group, but with its passage there seems to have set in a doldrum. What might have led to a virtual abortion was avoided in the 1830's by what William Henry Channing referred to as the grafting of German idealism "on the somewhat stunted stock of Unitarianism," the transcendental movement.⁵

Because many of those who are subjects of this study come within that group known as the transcendentalists, it demands an explanation of the relationship. William Henry Channing, who was both a

⁴*Webster's New International Dictionary* (1947) gives this definition for Unitarian: 1. Theologically and Ecclesiastically. One who denies the doctrine of the Trinity, believing that God exists only in one person . . . The churches of the Unitarian denomination . . . formerly differed widely among themselves, the conservatives holding a belief in super-naturalism and in various doctrines modified from those of the orthodox Trinitarian bodies; the radical school rejected supernaturalism. Later there came to be virtual unity on the broad basis of the doctrines of 'the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the leadership of Jesus, salvation by character, and the progress of mankind onward and upward forever' but the denomination now includes in its ministry as well as its membership a number of non-theistic humanists."

⁵*Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli*, edited and annotated by Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Henry Channing and James Freeman Clarke (Boston, 1881), II, 12.

Unitarian clergyman and also one of the transcendentalists, has already indicated that primarily transcendentalism was a movement within the Unitarian church. Consideration of who were some of its notable members points to the same conclusion: Rev. George Ripley, Rev. F. H. Hedge, Ralph Waldo Emerson (its three founders), Rev. James Freeman Clarke, Rev. John S. Dwight, Rev. Convers Francis, Bronson Alcott, Margaret Fuller and Elizabeth P. Peabody. And as to what transcendentalism was, again one of its members states: "We are called the Transcendentalists because we believe in an order of truth that transcends the sphere of the external senses. Our leading idea is the supremacy of mind over matter."⁶

II

UNITARIAN THOUGHT ABOUT THE STATUS QUO

Before discussing the ideas of the thirteen Unitarians who have been selected for examination, a brief survey may be made of some of the fruits of Unitarian effort during this period which tended towards being socialistic. As Parrington has mentioned: "Unitarianism is generous in its bequests to New England, and amongst its contributions to a nobler life not the least valuable was its warm social sympathy." Among these many activities we find the Massachusetts General Hospital, the Perkins Institute for the Blind, McLean Hospital, the Female Orphan Asylum—all of which, according to Frothingham, were founded by Unitarians in the Boston area. We find also Dr. Howe, who addressed seventeen state legislatures in an attempt to have them follow the practices he had instituted in Massachusetts.⁷

In education there is Rev. Charles Brooks, minister of the Second Church in Hingham, who, on several occasions appeared before states' legislatures advocating training schools for teachers. When the first normal school in the United States was opened at Lexington in 1839, its principal was another Unitarian clergyman, Rev. Cyrus Peirce. Earlier, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, Jeremy Belknap, noted both as an historian and as a clergyman, began urging

⁶George W. Cooke, *Unitarianism in America* (Boston, 1902), p. 154; and Morris Hillquit, *History of Socialism in the United States* (New York, 1903), quoting George Ripley, p. 105.

⁷Vernon L. Parrington, *The Romantic Revolution in America 1800-1860* (New York, 1927), p. 339; Cooke, op. cit., passim; Octavius B. Frothingham, *Boston Unitarianism, 1822-1850* (New York, 1890), p. 127.

the establishment of libraries, and in 1833 the first free public library in the United States to be supported by public funds was started under the direction of Rev. Abiel Abbot, at Peterborough, New Hampshire.⁸

The contributions of Thomas Jefferson should not be overlooked either, nor his various land schemes. In New York City Peter Cooper, manufacturer, inventor and philanthropist, who late in his life ran for President of the United States on the Greenback ticket, was an early advocate of paid police and fire departments, sanitary water conditions, and public schools.⁹

Of note, too, is the work of Dorothea Dix, who for many years not only in the United States but also in Canada and in Europe labored to obtain more public funds for better care of the mentally ill. She had in her early days lived in the household of Dr. William Ellery Channing, while teaching his children. She also was interested in providing life-saving equipment at dangerous spots such as Sable Island.

Besides these public institutions, Brook Farm, an experiment in communal living, was also a development instituted by Unitarians. George Ripley appears to have been the first to have had interest in beginning this project. Two and a half years before it was established, he had visited the German sectarian community at Zoar, Ohio. Along with his wife, Sophia, Bronson Alcott, and Margaret Fuller, under the inspiration of Rev. William Ellery Channing, they met in 1840 and drew up the plans for this farm. Ralph Waldo Emerson appears to have been interested in this at the time, and sat in on several of their meetings, but states that, "Not once could I be inflamed, but sat aloof and thoughtless."¹⁰

This farm was begun in 1841, with the purpose of substituting a system of brotherly cooperation for one of selfish competition. It operated on a joint stock proprietorship, and each of the members had free choice in occupation. It was not exclusively a Unitarian group, but certainly its leaders almost entirely belonged to this sect. A letter written in 1845 indicates that there were also Roman Catholics, Jews, Swedenborgians and trinitarians of various groups who belonged to the Community.¹¹

⁸Cooke, op. cit., passim; *New Hampshire*, in *American Guide Series* (New York 1938), pp. 82 f.

⁹Rossiter W. Raymond, *Peter Cooper* (Boston, 1901), pp. 58 ff.

¹⁰Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Journals* (Boston, 1909), V. 473.

¹¹John T. Codman, *Brook Farm, Historic and Personal Memoirs* (Boston, 1894), pp. 11, 269 ff.

Among Unitarians who might be mentioned as active in it in one way or another, but not to be dealt with later, were George William Curtis, noted both as author and orator, who, with his brother James, spent two years at the farm; and Nathaniel Hawthorne, who invested his savings in Brook Farm, but was never an enthusiastic advocate of the project, though he did live there for a short time. (In one of his later novels he refers to this experiment.) Its visitors included Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Theodore Parker and Elizabeth Palmer Peabody.¹²

Related to the later phase of Brook Farm is the growth of the Associationist movement in the United States, which was the American counterpart of Fourierism. It is important, as William Henry Channing states, to distinguish between the European Fourierism and the Associationists in America, since the latter "advocate only Fourier's plans for organizing industry." They did not accept the remainder of this complicated system. The Association group at the time it was founded chose as its president George Ripley; and two of its vice-presidents were Charles A. Dana and Parke Godwin. This movement lasted until early in the 1850's.¹³

In examining the ideas of various individuals, the first group is comprised of four men who were Unitarian clergymen — three of them probably the most notable of the time, and the other hardly less distinguished.¹⁴

William Ellery Channing, sometimes referred to as the father of American Unitarianism, was a grandson of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and a son of an Attorney-General of Rhode Island. Coming from this established background, he obviously was far from satisfied with the *status quo*. In a letter in 1832, he states "that the old principles of property are to undergo a fiery trial, that the monstrous inequalities of condition must be redressed, and that greater revolutions than the majority have dreamed of — whether for good or evil — are to be anticipated." And in the following year he again attacks the great concern with wealth, believing it to be the prevalent cause in resisting the development of the Christian spirit of humanity and brotherhood.¹⁵

¹²Lindsay Swift, *Brook Farm* (New York, 1900), *passim*.

¹³*The Present*, April 1, 1844, p. 431; Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

¹⁴The use of frequent and extensive quotations that follow throughout the section are essential, I believe, to convey with full strength the ideas of these writers.

¹⁵William Henry Channing, *The Life of William Ellery Channing*, D.D. (Boston, 1880), pp. 480, 511.

He advocated in his address on "Self Culture" in 1838, the policy of setting apart the fund derived from the sale of public lands to support public education. When the communal movements were becoming numerous in the early 1840's, he wrote the Rev. Adin Ballou, founder of one of these communities, that he considered their ends as being important: "I see, I feel the great evils of our present social state . . . I earnestly desire to witness some change," going on to point out that the great mass of men needed to be released from the present anxious drudgery.¹⁶

His nephew, Rev. William Henry Channing, was a more active and prolonged advocate of a complete social reform. He was editor on two occasions of briefly lived journals in 1843-44 and in 1849-50, and was also connected with the Associationist movement. Following the dying out of this he went to England as minister of a parish there, and returned during the Civil War to become pastor of the Washington Unitarian Church, during which period he was also for one year chaplain of the House of Representatives. After the war he returned to England, where he died.

An indication of his views is well-presented in several articles from his own periodicals. In 1843 he wrote about Fourier's ideas, which he welcomed warmly, and regarding those who were active in it, he stated: "The soul of this soldiery of peaceful conquest over injustice, are men and women sick at heart of the inevitable insincerities, unkindnesses, and numberless degradations of our present social state." In another article of the same year entitled "Social Reorganization," he indicated that reform in itself demanded not merely charity, but justice.

The charity we need is justice—justice in production, justice in distribution . . . The rallying cry today is SOCIAL REORGANIZATION . . . The error of the modern doctrine of liberty has been its tone of selfish independence; its idol has been individualism; its sin, lawlessness, its tendencies to anarchy. This isolation, however, is an inconsistency; for all liberty rests on the law of love.¹⁷

The following year he again stressed the affinity between religious and social development in an article entitled "Heaven Upon Earth." In his later publication, *The Spirit of the Age*, he wrote regarding "The Legacy of 1849 to 1850." In this he stated that the progress

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 511 ff.; *Dictionary of American Biography*, IV, 4 ff.

¹⁷*The Present*, Sept. 15, 1843, p. 29; Oct. 15, 1843, p. 43.

of liberalism is irresistible, and that liberalism cannot

. . . stop short of socialism. Mere modifications in government will in no wise secure this integral development of human nature in all classes, which the conscience of the age demands . . . The example of this Republic has proved to the world that a Free Government can and will be ruled by Finance and Commerce, by Bankers and Merchants, by Combined Capital, by Industrial Feudalism, until through some truly radical policy—radically constructive—the composite tyranny of Rent, Interests, Speculation, Wages is broken. The vital question, after all, it is seen, is the fundamental one of Labor and Wealth, which *must* be settled, and settled according to Laws of Divine Justice.

Reactionists however proudly seated in power, or Revolutionists however prostrate, are blind and deaf—if from the past year they do not draw at least this twofold lesson, that *Liberalism is of God, and that its heaven-appointed end is SOCIAL REORGANIZATION*.¹⁸

Turning to the Rev. James Freeman Clarke, whose activities extend considerably beyond this period, we find that he was very receptive to the ideas of Fourierism. In a review article in the *Christian Examiner*, though friendly towards Fourier's ideas, he did warn that his followers must not place all the blame on society. "The cure for social evils is to be found, we believe, first, in individual courage and holiness, and secondly, in an improvement of social organizations and arrangements." He believed that those who opposed the ideas of Fourier with ridicule and sneers were not acting wisely.¹⁹

His thorough opposition to capitalism he expressed forcefully:

The evils arising from want of organization appear most evidently when we consider this other great principle of modern society—freedom in the direction of industry. We have adopted the free trade principle in its fullest extent. We say, leave trade and industry to regulate themselves. We say to Government—'*laissez faire*, let us alone' . . .

On the 'let alone' principle, capital will always be able to take advantage of labor, and for this simple reason, the capital *can wait*, labor cannot.²⁰

¹⁸*Ibid.*, April 1, 1844, p. 422; *The Spirit of the Age*, Jan. 12, 1850, pp. 24 f.

¹⁹James Freeman Clarke, "Fourierism," *The Christian Examiner*, XXXVII (July, 1844), 72, 78.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 68, 70.

A few years later, in a letter to a fellow clergyman, he again states: "I think we ought to do justice to socialism—to say a word in favor of protective unions, model lodging houses, etc.; and to distinguish between destructive and constructive socialism."²¹

Following the break-up of Brook Farm, Dr. Clarke purchased it, apparently with some idea of forming an association group here with some of his friends, but this was never put into practice.

The other eminent Unitarian divine of this period is Rev. Theodore Parker. He was not, as George Ripley pointed out in a review of a sermon of his, an Associationist, technically speaking:

But his deep insight into the falseness and corruption of the present order of society, leads him to anticipate the period when the law of justice and love will be applied to all the relations of life. This is the essential object aimed at by the Associationists; and its realization will no doubt be hastened by such bold and vigorous criticisms as we are accustomed to look for from the biting pen of Mr. Parker.²²

Also following a reading of an article by Orestes Brownson on the laboring classes, Parker stated that though his property notions did not agree with those expressed in the article, nevertheless, he believed that the existing property scheme entailed awful evils in society. "This question, first of inherited property, and next of all private property, is to be handled in the nineteenth century, and made to give in its reason why the whole thing should not be abated as a nuisance. Society now rests on a great lie. Money and service have much to answer for."²³

The next group of three are men who for a time were Unitarian clergymen, but left the cloth to go into other activities. John S. Dwight became one of the foremost music critics of his time after his period of activity with Brook Farm and the Associationist movement. We find that in his writings he very closely ties in the religious and political elements of man. In an article in *The Harbinger*, in which he sets out to tell what made him an Associationist, he declares:

²¹James Freeman Clarke, *Autobiography, Diary and Correspondence* (Boston, 1891), pp. 184 f.

²²George Ripley, "Review," *The Harbinger*, IV (May 22, 1847), 376.

²³Peter Dean, *The Life and Teachings of Theodore Parker* (London, 1877), p. 206.

One will answer: It was the religious sentiment. I sought to be a follower of Christ in earnest . . . When I went out among men, and when the general example, the un-Christian policy of nations, the selfishness of trades and politics, the misery and the depravity on all sides threatened to down the formed ideal out of thought, and seemed to mock my prayer, and when I sought to make accomodation with my conscience, and to be like other men, dismissing high hopes of humanity and eager only to secure the main chance, then was my soul chilled with the consciousness that I had stepped upon the cold borders of atheism.²⁴

He said that he also found this same atheism in the churches, and in his search,

I was led to recognize this second babe in the manger, this announcer of the Social Science, and the practical *form* of christianity, Christ is the *life* of the new kingdom; but the life yet waiteth to be organized; and FOURIER has discovered its *organic law* . . .

I know no infidelity so black, as infidelity to this great hope.²⁵

He went on to see in industrial association the great possibility of overcoming the inadequacies of the prevailing system of education. He also recognized that the dominant fear regarding Associationism was the possible loss of individuality.

We are prepared to take the grounds that there is not, and never can be, Individuality, so long as there is not Association. Without true union no part can be true . . .

With regard to full Association, therefore, in a Phalanx where all the elements of society exist, well organized . . . the question of Individuality decides itself.²⁶

There is, with little question, no greater advocate of individuality than Ralph Waldo Emerson during this period. Even so, we find that Emerson, for all his stress on the individual, is at times and in varying degrees receptive to the ideas both of communal life and government participation that were being advocated at this time.

²⁴John S. Dwight, "What Made You an Associationist," *The Harbinger*, VII (August 12, 1848), 116

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶John S. Dwight, "Individuality in Association," *The Harbinger*, I (October 4, 1845), p. 264.

He mentions that he has recently had the opportunity of learning something about the socialists through that indefatigable apostle of the sect, Arthur Brisbane. Emerson points out, however, regarding this system of Fourier which Brisbane espoused, that

Fourier had skipped no fact but one, namely life . . .

Yet in a day of small, sour, and fierce schemes, one is admonished and cheered by a project of such friendly aims, and of such bold and generous proportion; there is an intellectual courage and strength in it which is superior and commanding; it certifies the presence of so much truth in the theory, and in so far is destined to be fact.²⁷

In his article, "New England Reformers," which he read before Rev. J. F. Clarke's Unitarian group, he pointed out that the criticism and attack on existing institutions which was then prevalent at times overlooked the need for the renovation of man himself, and without this society could be nothing. In another of his lectures he contended that he was satisfied that the general system of trade "is a system of selfishness." In spite of such kindness to the reformed ideas, he still stated, "The less government we have the better—the fewer laws, and the less confided power. The antidote to this abuse of formal government is the influence of private character, the growth of the Individual." And still, contradictory as this may seem, he stated:

The State must consider the poor man and all voices must speak for him. Every child that is born must have a chance for his bread. Let amelioration in our laws of property proceed from the concession of the rich, not from the grasping of the poor. Let us begin by habitual imparting. Let us understand that the equitable rule is, that no one should take more than his share, let him be ever so rich.²⁸

Mr. Emerson, as has been pointed out already, displayed an interest in Brook Farm, and he also had an interest in Fruitlands when it was set up in 1843, holding a deed of land in this development for one of its members.

The third member of this group who was a clergyman and then entered the active period of Brook Farm and later in life devoted

²⁷Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Fourierism and the Socialists," *The Dial*, III (July, 1842), pp. 87, 89.

²⁸Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Centennial Edition; Boston, 1903), I, 232, 253 f.; III, 215, 261.

his time to writing, is George Ripley, the dynamo of Brook Farm. During the whole period of the Associationist movement, Ripley was one of its leading exponents. He points out in one of his articles in *The Harbinger* that the Unitarian group as a whole, being too fashionable, could not be expected to be in favor of any radical social changes.

Still, it must be admitted, that Unitarianism is founded on the principle of freedom of mind and the progress of humanity. We may, accordingly, always expect to find within its pale, men who are true to the noblest instincts of their nature, and who are prepared to yield a gracious hearing to any discovery, that comes recommended by its scientific character, or its apparent influence on the well-being of man . . . No greater, no more sacred, no more benevolent work could be entrusted to their charge than the demonstration of the falseness and disorder, inherent in the very framework of modern society, and the call to their hearers, to make ready for the 'coming of the Lord,' in a divine social state, which shall at once typify the joy of Heaven, and worthily represent the spirit of Christianity.²⁹

The final group to be considered are laymen within the Unitarian movement. The strongest exponent of these of government activity in a wide realm of man's existence is John Quincy Adams, who throughout the whole period of his government life strongly supported a program of internal improvements at government expense. He went so far as to state that if necessary, constitutional changes should be made, so that such a program could be implemented.³⁰

Before consideration of his government activity, it might be pointed out that he was well acquainted with several of the communal experiments that took place during his day. As early as 1817, he had become acquainted with Robert Owen in London, and was still in touch with him at the time of his visit to the United States in 1844-45. By this latter date, however, Adams had become very soured on Mr. Owen, possibly, though there is no direct evidence to support this, because of his strong anti-religious ideals. He had in the

²⁹George Ripley, "Unitarianism and Association," *The Harbinger*, V (October 2, 1847), 271.

³⁰James D. Richardson, *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1902* (1907), II, 298.

earlier period been much more receptive to Owen, and even as late as 1845 presented a motion in the House of Representatives to grant the use of its hall to Mr. Owen for several lectures—a motion which was defeated. In 1828 he had also met Mr. Rapp, the founder of the Rappite community in Indiana.

In the realm of government activity Adams states that as early as his tenure of office as a Senator while Jefferson was President, there had been introduced his bill for internal improvements, though under the name of another Senator. In his first annual address to Congress when he himself was President, he very strongly came out for various government-sponsored activities which included a national university, a government astronomical observatory, and government-sponsorship of a ship to survey the Pacific coast. He pointed out that President Washington had advocated a national university, but the land which he had suggested for this was still barren in the capital, though his parallel recommendation of a military institute was bearing fruit at West Point.³¹

In his first annual address Adams proceeds to declare:

. . . If the power . . . may be effectually brought into action by laws promoting the improvement of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, the cultivation and encouragement of the mechanics and of the elegant arts, the advancement of literature, and the progress of the sciences, ornamental and profound;—to refrain from exercising them for the benefit of the people themselves would be to hide in the earth the talents permitted to our charge—would be treachery to the most sacred of trusts.³²

Adams pushed this program of government participation in internal improvement also in his inaugural address and at various other times. He later on, when out of office, stated that he regretted that his policies had not been more successful, and in a letter to Rev. Charles W. Upham in 1837, stated:

I fear I have done and can do little good in the world.
And my life will end in disappointment of the good which
I would have done had I been permitted. The great effort

³¹*Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States*, 19th Cong., 1st Sess. (Washington, 1825), pp. 21-27; *The Selected Writings of John and John Quincy Adams*, Adrienne Koch and William Peden, eds. (New York, 1946), p. 389.

³²*Journal*, p. 389.

of my administration was to mature into a permanent and regular system the application of all the superfluous revenue of the Union to internal improvements which at this day would have afforded high wages and constant employment to hundreds and thousands of laborers, in which every dollar expended would have repaid itself fourfold in the enhanced value of the public lands. With this system in ten years from this day the surface of the whole Union would have been checkered over with railroads and canals. It may still be done half a century later, and with the limping gait of state legislature and private adventure.³³

And two weeks after he laid the cornerstone of the Cincinnati Astronomical Observatory in 1843, he wrote in his diary:

I have performed my task, I have executed my undertaking and am returned safe to my family and my home. It is not much in itself. It is nothing in the estimation of the world. In my motives, in my hopes, it is considerable. The people of this country do not sufficiently estimate the importance of patronizing and promoting science as a principle of political action.³⁴

Following in the same tenor as John Quincy Adams is Horace Mann, the most noted educator in the country during the Nineteenth Century. Dr. George A. Hubbell, who has written a scholarly biography of Mann, indicates that any assessment of his work must keep in mind his philosophy of society and government, which Hubbell expresses as:

He believed that the state exists to give to every one who acts in union with others, what he could not have alone; to protect the weak and to restrain the strong; to make such laws, regulations and restrictions as shall make it easy to do right and hard to do wrong.

. . . Anything that would make man more efficient, without restricting his individual liberty, Mr. Mann held as within the province of the state.³⁵

That Hubbell's evaluation, on the basis of a much more thorough study of Mann than is undertaken here, is valid, is supported by

³³Koch, op. cit., p. 389.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 407.

³⁵George A. Hubbell, *Horace Mann* (Philadelphia, 1910), pp. 61 f.

Mann's own statement in his report of 1843 to the Massachusetts Board of Education, when, in offering a solution to remove the misery and inequality that existed, he said:

The only remedy, this side of miracles, which presents itself to the clear vision of this class, is in a laborious process of renovation, in a thorough physical, mental, spiritual culture of the rising generation, reaching to its depths, extending to its circumference, *sustained by the power and resources of the government*, and carried forward irrespective of party and denomination.³⁶

He was fully in line with the socialist view that much of the existing economic inequality is due to unjust distribution when he declared in the same report: "Wealth, by force of unjust laws and institutions, is filched from the producer, and gathered into vast masses, to give power and luxury and aggrandizement to a few. Of *production*, there is no end; of *distribution*, there is no beginning."³⁷

It is needless to expand here upon Mann's campaign to have education recognized as a public responsibility—it was the practical implementation of his theories that such problems should not be left to the fortune, whims and welfare of a few who might have the economical means to establish schools for all.

Bronson Alcott is one of the earlier Unitarians to turn his thoughts to socialistic ideas. When he started teaching about 1826 he noted that one of the three books that had been most influential with him was Robert Owen's *A New View of Society*. Several years later he stated that he was pleased with many of the articles which he had recently read in the *New Harmony Gazette*. Owen's views in general were agreeable to him but he did object to his attacks upon the Christian religion, "or rather to the disrespect which its editors pay to religious opinions generally."³⁸

His connection with Brook Farm has already been mentioned. His dissatisfaction with it as not being sufficiently ideal led to his establishing Fruitlands, in 1843. This latter experiment in its management was more impractical than was any other community of the period. And it appears that Alcott did swing over to this extreme during these years. He wrote in his *Journal* in 1847, "Why should

³⁶*Life and Works of Horace Mann*, Mary Peabody Mann, ed. (Boston, 1891), III, 410.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 405.

³⁸*The Journals of Bronson Alcott*, Odell Shepard, ed. (Boston, 1938), pp. 3, 20.

I need a State to maintain me and protect my rights?" And like his friend Henry David Thoreau, he fell afoul of the law for refusing to pay taxes.³⁹

In Charles A. Dana, one of the great editors of the latter half of his century, we see the instance of a man who in early life is much captivated by an idea, only to turn very strongly against it when it does not develop according to his dreams. In his early twenties he joined Brook Farm and became a very ardent advocate of Fourierism, but after it petered out he was closer to the conservative group in politics. In late life, however, he revealed that his early ideas had never completely died. He delivered an address at the University of Michigan in 1895, on Brook Farm, which he concluded thusly:

We may say, that as a reform of society, the movement accomplished nothing. But what it did accomplish was a great deal of good for those who were concerned in it and no great loss for any of those who furnished money. Still the question remains: Is the theory sound? Is that sort of social reform practicable? Fourier said it was, and that in the revolutions of time it would be brought about by natural causation, and without any special effort, though it might be hastened . . . But is it a valid philosophy? Is there truth in it? Is it the Destiny of Man? I do not know; but I am sure that if it be the destiny of the future, mankind will have reason to thank the Infinite Father for conferring upon His children the manifold blessings of industrial attraction and passional harmony.⁴⁰

Another who, like Dana, was not certain of the answer, was Margaret Fuller. A frequent visitor to Brook Farm, she was questioned on one of her visits by John S. Dwight, who asked her if she were in sympathy with the idea. To this she replied: "I have as yet full faith in no single idea. . . . I believe that Owen had Christ's idea as much in mind when he began New Harmony as Mr. Ripley has now."⁴¹

As the years passed she became a little warmer to the ideas of many of her friends and wrote in her journal: "My hopes might lead to Association, too,—an association, if not of efforts, yet of destinies

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁴⁰Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 100; James H. Wilson, *The Life of Charles A. Dana* (New York, 1907), pp. 533 f.

⁴¹Madeleine B. Stern, *The Life of Margaret Fuller* (New York, 1942), pp. 255, 257.

. . . Association may be the great experiment of the age, still it is only an experiment."⁴²

It was during the later days of her brief life, when she had gone to Europe, that she gave the strongest expression to accepting these ideas. Questioning whether or not she could say that the social laws of the United States were generally better, she answered herself, "I do indeed say what I believe, that voluntary associations for improvement in these particulars will be the grand means for my nation to grow."

From Paris she wrote:

The doctrines of Fourier are making progress, and wherever they spread, the necessity of some practical application of the precepts of Christ, in lieu of the mummeries of a worn-out ritual, cannot fail to be felt. The more I see of the terrible ills which infest the body politic of Europe, the more indignation I feel at the selfishness or stupidity of those in my own country who oppose an examination of these subjects . . . His (Fourier's) heart was that of a genuine lover of his kind, of a philanthropist in the sense of Jesus; his views are large and noble; his life was one of devout study on these subjects, and I should pity the person who, after the briefest sojourn in Manchester and Lyons, the most superficial acquaintance with the population of London and Paris, could seek to hinder a study of his thoughts or be wanting in reverence for his purposes.⁴³

And finally there is the testimony of Parke Godwin, the nephew of William Cullen Bryant, and like him and Dana, editor of a New York newspaper. Godwin is placed by Morris Hillquit, along with Arthur Brisbane and Horace Greeley, as one of the three strongest advocates of Fourierism in the United States. (It should be noted that Greeley was not a Unitarian, but was next door; he was a Universalist.)

Godwin's stand is well indicated in several articles which he wrote for *The Present* in 1843 and 1844. He strongly attacked the system of *laissez-faire* and declared that theoretically no privileged classes existed in the United States but that practically a regime of caste existed which was brought about by the complete lack of social and industrial organization. For his view that labor was being oppressed

⁴²*Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli*, II, 73.

⁴³*Ibid.*, pp. 206, 228.

he drew support from the leading economists of the day, citing Say, Adam Smith, McCullough and Malthus.

Contending that commerce is the legitimate offspring of the existing competitive system of industry, he asserted that it has become the master of agriculture and manufacturing, whereas it should be their handmaid.

It absorbs all property, in regulating values by means of banks; it concentrates wealth in the hands of a few men in a few central places; it is the source of innumerable frauds, fluctuations, bankruptcies and commercial crises; and it is fast laying its hand upon the land, by means of agricultural loaning companies,—and upon governments, by means of national debt.⁴⁴

In line with Robert Owen he declaimed that, "Human beings are not mere commodities, whose price augments and diminishes with the supply in the market. *Society owes them a guarantee of life and work* . . . Labor is their property; the highest form and source of all property . . . God placed them on the earth to advance." (Note that his view that labor is the source of all property preceded Marx by several years.)⁴⁵

As the solution to the iniquities and inequities of society Godwin propounded:

One fact, as much as any other, strikes us when we consider the material creation of God. It is, that this whole universe is made according to a law of organization; that there is nothing in it incoherent or at loose-ends; that from the planet to the plant, from the stars which are the suns of worlds of unimaginable magnitude, to the insect whose body is three million times less than a visible point, amidst the endless variety of forms and existences that link by link supply the interval, there is an organic law pervading the whole . . . This immutable and eternal fact, is impressed on all we see, that nothing is perfect which is not organized . . . And here we are struck with a notable anomaly in the midst of all these arrangements . . . In the sphere of labor alone, has the world remained in the state of isolated, incoherent, cut-throat individuality and com-

⁴⁴Parke Godwin, "Constructive and Pacific Democracy," *The Present*, Dec. 15, 1843, pp. 184-189.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 192.

petitive antagonism . . . Why should not laborers band together for the accomplishment of their ends; not as a class merely, not as a political party, not for selfish or temporary purposes, but as the great, collective, eternal POWER OF PRODUCTION?⁴⁶

Two years later his enthusiasm had waned with the failure of Associationism to make the expected progress. In a letter to Charles Dana he wrote that society was not yet prepared for the great leap into Associationism. "We have failed because we have desired to go too fast and too far at once . . . The duty of Associationism is to take up Society, where it is, and carry it on gradually to its ulterior destiny." And so Godwin retired to the comfort of the editorial chair to accept society at its own pace.⁴⁷

III

CONCLUSIONS

Many other prominent Unitarians in this period might be studied to determine their views on this matter.⁴⁸ Unfortunately the extent of this paper will not permit inclusion of such persons as Dorothea Dix, Samuel Gridley Howe, Maria Childs, the novelist, the Peabody sisters, Thomas Jefferson, or any number of the eminent divines and educators such as Jared Sparks, Edward Everett and John T. Kirkland or the historians George Bancroft, Thomas Motley, William Prescott and Francis Parkman. Some of them, from superficial observation, appear to hold ideas similar to those presented above—but it would not be valid to include them as basis for the conclusions which are presented, without closer examination.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, March 1, 1844, pp. 338 f.

⁴⁷Quoted from Bryant-Godwin Papers (New York Public Library), in Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr., *The Idea of Progress in America 1815-1860* (New York, 1944), p. 145.

⁴⁸For the Unitarian connection of the previous five laymen see as follows: Horace Mann, cf. *Dictionary of American Biography*, XII, 242; Bronson Alcott, *Journals*, pp. 25, 410, 487-89; Charles A. Dana, *Dictionary of American Biography*, V, 50 f.; Margaret Fuller, Cooke, op. cit., p. 368; Parke Godwin, *New York Daily Tribune*, Jan. 8, 1904; and for Thomas Jefferson, cf. *Thomas Jefferson's Religious Views*, quoted from his own writings, Henry Wilder Foote, ed. (Boston, 1951), pp. 1 ff.

As indicated in the introduction, the purpose here is not merely to establish a relation between Unitarians and reform movements in general. Any social history of the United States during the Nineteenth Century does that. Here, the more specific relation between those holding Unitarian theological views and the expression of socialistic ideas is the objective.

Rev. William Ellery Channing has expressed it aptly: "We find no sufficient field in societies which are instituted to remove particular evils, such as intemperance, slavery, war, etc."⁴⁹ That, it seems, is the basic distinction between social reform as a general idea, and a socialistic approach to the problem. In most of these Unitarians there appears this recognition that what is needed is not a mere whittling away at the symptoms of the diseased society, but that the malady itself must be attacked.

There is a virtual unity among them in being dissatisfied with the existing social and economic status. Almost with one accord they virulently attack the competitive, *laissez-faire* system—that in itself, to many, would label them Socialists. However, negation is not sufficient, there must be an alternative. And here there is considerable divergence among these people.

Among some, such as Margaret Fuller and Theodore Parker, there is a groping for a solution. They are not fully satisfied with the panacea offered by the Associationists and yet they recognize some of its possibilities. Among others, of whom Emerson is most notable, the problem of maintaining individuality steps into their thinking to erect a barrier to accepting these new ideas, though recognizing again, some of the advantages of the communal approach. With Ripley, William Henry Channing and their whole group there is no doubt in their minds that the communal group, and later the Associationist idea, is the answer. They do not give much consideration to the idea of government participation but there is room left in their system whereby such could be accommodated. In John Quincy Adams and Horace Mann there is a full-fledged democratic socialism. It seems inconceivable that if Adams' policies had prevailed that the great railway fortunes, for example, would have come into existence in the latter half of the century. Railways along with many other things, under his plans, would have been within the control and ownership of the government.

⁴⁹William Henry Channing, *Life*, p. 479.

It might be added that the close relation between religion and political life which many of these writers, both lay and clerical, emphasized, bears a great resemblance to the Christian Socialism contemporarily expounded by the Church of England clerics, Charles Kingsley and F. D. Maurice.

As to the effect of the ideas of these people, little attempt has been made to trace this, and it is doubtful if anything more than suggested influences could be established. It perhaps can be best assessed in the words which Parke Godwin used after decrying the use of force to bring change in 1848.

Here then, is the justification of these popular uprisings. They have brought the great social burden of the times to the surface. It has been made a positive and permanent fact in the history of our race . . . Never again will the satraps of Despotism be able to wink the cause of the people out of sight. They may put down armies, imprison leaders, and head and quarter insurrectionists of every nature; but the immortal Truth of socialism can not be extinguished . . . As well might you attempt to blot out the life of Jesus from humanity, to quench the protestant spirit awakened by Luther, and arrest the free influences of '76, as to erase the inoculation of socialism made by the year 1848. It has passed into the very flesh and bones of the social body.⁵⁰

Socialistic ideas during this period were not confined to Unitarians alone, but the record does appear to show that at least among the leaders of Unitarian thought there was a marked affinity for these ideas—an affinity that exceeded the prevailing norm. The religion of these men was a forceful social gospel which few other denominations of the time espoused. Their theological views attempted to bridge the oft-times gap between religion and reality, and in doing so they found the economic and social world inadequate. It was through this rational attempt to bring harmony between religion and reality that the Channings, John Quincy Adams, Clarke, Ripley and these other Unitarian thinkers expressed their socialistic ideas. Not all of them had answers, but, with a recognition of the individual as the center of existence their thoughts ran in the direction of man the individual achieving his best through a planned society of cooperation, rather than an antagonistic, competitive, *laissez-faire* free-for-all.

⁵⁰Parke Godwin, "Revolutions in Europe," *The Harbinger*, VII (Sept. 9, 1848), 148.

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SOME ENGLISH DISSENTERS AND THEIR AMERICAN FRIENDS

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The difference between modern America and modern England seems so vast that it is difficult to take our minds back to a time when at least the difference was of another kind and to appreciate that the personal and cultural ties between the mother country and what were then colonies was essentially unlike anything existing to-day. This is most strongly brought out at the time of the American Revolution. It is easy now to think in terms of YOU and US, but there is something of an anachronism to use them of the eighteenth century. The family ties were then, of course, much closer, and the struggle for independence appeared to many to be of the nature of a civil war. In England sympathy with the cause of the Americans was strongest among the radical Dissenters, who were, almost to a man, as much opposed to the government of the day as were the colonists. The affection then shown for the emergent United States has remained strong especially, I believe, among members of the churches represented in the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, which to-day I have the honour of representing at your meetings. The object of this paper is to follow some of the ramifications between Dissenters and their friends on this side of the Atlantic.

The word Dissent or Nonconformity, has, I suppose for the American, only a historic interest, but in England and Scotland it refers to a very real condition, though it is not always the same people who are Dissenters north of the Border as are south of it. In both countries there exist Established Churches, Episcopal in England and Presbyterian in Scotland, and though neither any longer have control outside their own membership, they both enjoy positions of prestige that others do not. Both churches, I think, serve great ends, on the whole nobly, and there is certainly little if any demand for dis-establishment. But in the eighteenth century it was very different. In 1689 a limited Toleration had been granted, but Test and Corporation Acts made taking the sacrament according to the Anglican rite obligatory for holding office of different kinds, and,

though these acts may have frequently been evaded, it was not until 1828 that they were repealed. As for Unitarians they had been specifically exempted from the benefits of the Act of Toleration, and though, in 1774 Theophilus Lindsey opened the chapel in Essex Street off the Strand in London, and called it 'Unitarian,' it was not until 1813 that an Act was passed repealing the exclusion from the Toleration Act of persons preaching or writing in denial of the Trinity, and repealing the really savage Scottish Acts of 1661 and 1695 whereby the death penalty could be invoked. It was not until 1833 that a marriage could be performed in a Nonconformist chapel and not until after 1851 that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were fully open to all.

Though complete religious freedom was by no means what either the Pilgrim Fathers or the Puritan emigrants to New England had in mind, and was certainly far from what they practised, at least the congregational ecclesiastical organization here was not Anglicanism. At home in England, the failure of the Presbyterians to set up Presbyterianism under the Commonwealth, and the subsequent establishment of episcopacy at the Restoration, had necessitated the organization of nonconformist churches as congregational churches, though local classical associations and provincial assemblies kept alive the Presbyterian idea of closer integration. Individual congregations might trace their lineage to Presbyterian or Congregational founders, yet all tended to become similar, and during the eighteenth century even the names came to be used with different meanings to their original. Roughly speaking it was the Presbyterians who refused and the Independents or Congregationalists who insisted upon subscription to confessions of faith, and as a result of this it was in the old Presbyterian chapels that Unitarianism either as Arian or Socinian made its way so that by the early nineteenth century the terms Unitarian and Presbyterian were often used to describe the same people or same movements. It is therefore not surprising that the nonconformists of England should have shown great interest in the colonies, and sympathy with both developing political and theological ideas.

Though the great trek of both men and ideas was of course from east to west, there were also frequent returns. I think that the great growth of the means of inland transport has led us to forget that in spite of all the difficulties and terrible dangers of the sea, the communities bordering on it were as much united as divided by

it. As early civilization developed round the Mediterranean, so in the eighteenth century, civilization developed round the Atlantic seaboard. Family ties were also closer, and it is of interest to note that a family like the Mathers which we look upon as so distinctly New England, were also represented in England. Three of the four sons of Richard Mather, who had emigrated to New England from Liverpool in 1635, returned to serve as chaplains in Cromwell's army, and though Increase went back after the Restoration, the other two, Nathaniel and Samuel remained. Later Mathers appear in the roll of ministers and I cannot help feeling that one in the Liverpool district who earned the nickname of Bishop of Rainford, had the same imperious temperament as his American cousins.

With the development of Harvard College, one would not expect New England to send her sons home to be educated in Dissenting academies, and indeed there is no evidence that the famous Warrington Academy, for example, ever enrolled New Englanders. There were students from other parts of the country. A "Mr. Edward Garlick" who died there on the 14th December 1758 aged fifteen was a native of Virginia. "But being removed to England" the tablet in Cairo Street Chapel, Warrington, still reminds us, "for his education he became a member of the Academy at Warrington where the amiableness of his disposition, the sobriety of his manners and his uncommon love of literature rendered him beloved and honoured by his tutors and the companions of his studies and raised the most pleasing expectations in his relatives and friends." Ten years later Samuel Brailsford, once of Charleston, South Carolina, placed his son there, and in 1778, in the middle of the Revolutionary War, Henry Laurens, son of Henry Laurens who was then President of Congress, became a student. Other Americans who seem to have been educated there during the wars were William Miller of Philadelphia and Cornelius Wallace of New York. Two of the English students, John Vaughan and Ralph Eddowes emigrated to Philadelphia and were instrumental not only in organizing the first Unitarian church there but as lay preachers in keeping it going through its early days.

There must be many instances of the great merchants of Bristol, Liverpool and other ports having intimate connections in America. John Pemberton, one of the original pewholders in Benn's Garden Chapel, (a forerunner of the church in Ullet Road, Liverpool, of which I am treasurer) had inherited land in Virginia as well as in

Liverpool from his father, as well as shares in the ships "Concord" and "Amity." The minister there, Henry Winder, formed a library which he bequeathed to his flock, and among the items were several sermons printed here in Boston of the Rev. Benjamin Colman of the Brattle Street Church. I could not of course identify his writing, but several of them have in a neat hand, "For Mr. Henry Winder." There is a gap of half a century before more literature printed here is to be found in the Library and then we get volumes and volumes of early Unitarian tracts and sermons published both in Philadelphia and Boston. Since then the indebtedness has continued.

The relationship was not always quite so happy. Soon after the Treaty of Paris one of my ancestors, a Richard Durning, decided to try his fortune in New York. He had been brought up in the chapel of which Winder had once been minister, and therefore I suppose was well impregnated with liberal theological ideas. Anyway on the 11th March 1785 his father wrote to him, "I am sorrie to hear tht there is not yet no place of publick worship the same as you have been used to. I hope when things are more settled you will meet with one more to your mind. I hope you will ever attend on Publick Worship." Richard's personal experience may have been unfortunate because a young sister writing to find out if he could get preserves and pickles in New York reported how their own minister had laughed "at you being taken in at the charity Sermon." The young Liverpoolian's strictures on the absence of a congenial church were also repeated by Joseph Priestly when he landed there in 1794, and though welcomed by the laity was aggrieved that no church was offered him in which to preach.

But these incidents are merely of secondary importance mentioned to intimate the frequent intercourse between ordinary men and women of England and America. The background of political disabilities to which I have referred provided a guarantee that when the colonies should fall out with the government they would find a section of the mother country predisposed to be on their side. From the time of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, to the end of the reign of George II, with the exception of that of Anne, the Dissenters had been loyal to the crown, and could be counted upon to support the Hanoverian succession. Test and Corporation Acts could be forgotten at times of Jacobite rebellions. Though by 1745 the Church of England was too well established in the affections of ordinary people to be easily overthrown, the Dissenters could easily believe,

should the Stuarts return, their lot would be worse rather than better. So they enlisted in defense of the Protestant Succession, and lent money for the equipment of the volunteers. One such public spirited minister was Henry Winder who lent £200 to the Corporation of Liverpool for equipping a regiment it had raised, called the Liverpool Blues. It is satisfactory to know that he was repaid in the following year. But with the accession of George III, and the return to power of the Tories, the Dissenters, as Whigs, went into opposition. Therefore it was not unnatural that Americans coming to England should drift into the company of Dissenters, who sympathized with them in their struggle with arbitrary power and who were a little wistful of the civic equality that seemed to be enjoyed among men of similar religious beliefs to theirs on the other side of the Atlantic. Benjamin Franklin may be taken as a classic example of the American, who though not allowing that he belonged to any religious party became intimate when in London with Dissenters, of whom the two most famous were Richard Price and Joseph Priestley.

Price was minister of the Gravel Pit Chapel, Hackney, then a suburb of London. He was not only a theologian, holding Arian views, but also a mathematician, and an expert in financial subjects, and was frequently referred to by his contemporaries as the great and good Dr. Price. The distress that was frequently caused by disasters of bubble insurance companies led him to the study of actuarial science, and it was largely due to his researches, the results of which were published in his "*Observations on Reversionary Payments*," in 1771, that life insurance was put on a sound basis. He was therefore a man of importance in the life of the capital. An ardent adherent of civil and religious liberty 'all the world over' to use the words of the old toast, his sympathies were out and out with the Americans in their struggle with the old country. One authority has suggested that the idea of casting the tea into Boston Bay originated with him. His pamphlet on Civil Liberty not only hardened Whig opinion at home in favour of the Americans, but in conjunction with Paine's "*Common Sense*," it has been held, encouraged the publication of the Declaration of Independence. In an England, where as we have seen, Dissenters were barely tolerated and representative government frequently unrepresentative, Price saw in the success of the American Revolution a guarantee that liberty should not perish from the earth, and that the new Republic beyond the seas would provide an asylum, should the need arise,

not only for Englishmen like himself, but for the persecuted of all nations. These hopes we know to-day have been largely realized, for unnumbered thousands from the Old World have found refuge here.

Price's pamphlet met with an enormous success at home and was translated into various languages. It brought him the thanks of the Common Council of the City of London for his having laid down "those pure principles upon which alone the supreme legislative authority of Great Britain over her colonies can be justly or beneficially maintained." At the same time was conferred upon him the Freedom of the City of London, a great honour always, but when we recollect that it was conferred on a dissenting minister who had attacked the government of the day on behalf of rebellious colonists, we must admit, very exceptional.

Doubtless long before this Benjamin Franklin had reported back to his employers in Philadelphia and Boston the part Price was playing on their behalf, and even without his latest pamphlet, Price would be known to many in the new country as a financial expert and man of personal integrity. So on October 6th, 1778, the American Congress resolved "that the Honourable Benjamin Franklin, Arthur Lee, and John Adams, Esquires, or any one of them be directed forthwith to apply to Dr. Price and inform him that it is the desire of Congress to consider him as a Citizen of the United States, and to receive his assistance in regulating their finances. That if he shall think it expedient to remove with his family to America and afford such assistance, a generous provision shall be made for requiting his services." Price was at the time 56, an age which we now consider almost juvenile, but in the eighteenth century men aged earlier, and he felt that he was "advancing so fast into the evening of life, that he cannot think of a removal." Had early American finances been better managed, it would no doubt have been to the general advantage, but Price himself might have proved something of a disappointment. As it was, it was he who advised the younger Pitt on the finances of the Sinking Fund. It was believed that the National Debt could be completely liquidated if money was invested at compound interest, but unfortunately the French Revolutionary Wars made new borrowing necessary so that the Government ended by borrowing at a high rate to pay off that borrowed at a low!

Price's connections with the new republic were not confined to politics. Yale conferred upon him on the 24th April 1781, the

degree of LL.D. when the only other recipient of that honour was George Washington. Six years later, and some four after the restoration of peace, Dr. Ezra Stiles, President of Yale, finding that the scientific apparatus of his college was inadequate and behind the times, wrote to Price to engage his help in bringing it up to standard. Not only did Price supervise its purchase in London but he also bore part of the expense, as, he said, a contribution and token of his good will and respect. A recent biographer of his has written that it is clear "that in these critical early years of its existence, America looked to Price, as to the ablest of its own citizens, to guide its destiny."

Among other habitués of the "Club of Honest Whigs" that Franklin attended, first in a coffee-house in St. Paul's Churchyard and later at the London Coffee House on Ludgate Hill, was Joseph Priestley, another Dissenting minister and scientist. More revolutionary in temperament than Price, he was his junior by some ten years but their common interest in theology and science bound them together. Priestley had been encouraged by Franklin in his early experiments into electricity, and though it is as the discoverer of oxygen that he has found a lasting place in history, he himself regarded his calling as a minister of the gospel as of greater importance. These Dissenting ministers who frequented the Club were sometimes on familiar terms with the great Whig leaders, who though themselves members of the established church, were anxious, especially at election times, to court the Dissenting vote. Among them was William Petty, Earl of Shelburne, later first Marquis of Lansdowne. When in search of a Librarian he turned for advice to Price who recommended Joseph Priestley. Thus from 1773 to 1780, vital years in the struggle of the colonies with the mother country, Priestley was established in the family of that statesman who at a later date was to make the peace of Paris. During the times that Priestley spent in his employer's London home, scarcely a day passed in which he and Franklin did not meet. Along with Edmund Burke, Priestley accompanied Franklin to his examination on the petition of the General Court of Massachusetts demanding the recall of Governor Hutchinson, in 1774, when for over an hour, the solicitor-general, Wedderburn, made him the butt of his invective. When all attempts to prevent the outbreak of war had failed, Franklin and Priestley spent the last day before his departure together. Throughout the war they managed to correspond, and in one of these letters Priestley declared "that the Club of *Honest Whigs*, as you justly

call them, think themselves much honoured by you having been one of them, and also by your kind remembrance of them."

It is good to recollect that Price and Priestly and other Dissenters, did what they could to ameliorate the lot of American prisoners of war in this country. Franklin recollected them both, when writing in 1788, for he said, "Remember me affectionately to good Dr. Price and to the honest heretic Dr. Priestley. I do not call him *honest* by way of distinction; for I think all the heretics I have known have been virtuous men . . . It is not to my good friend's heresy that I impute his honesty. On the contrary, it is his honesty that has brought upon him the character of heretic."

Priestley's sympathies with the French as well as the American revolutionaries were treated more roughly by his compatriots, and after the destruction of his house by a Birmingham mob, in 1794, he migrated to the United States. His stay at Philadelphia and his strengthening of the Unitarian Congregation there are outside the orbit of this paper, though we may recall that two of the men who were doing so much to make the Unitarian church there a success were Ralph Eddowes, a former pupil of Priestley's at Warrington, and John Vaughan a student at a later date.

But I do not think we can quite pass over Priestley's American life without mentioning his correspondence with Thomas Jefferson. Probably they had already met in London in 1786, and if so the acquaintance was renewed when Priestley arrived in Philadelphia, which was then of course the seat of Congress. Writing to his friend Theophilus Lindsey in London, Priestley reported that Jefferson had attended his services. "He is" he said, "generally considered an unbeliever; if so, however, he cannot be far from us, and I hope in the way to be almost if not altogether what we are. He now attends public worship very regularly, and his moral conduct was never impeached." When at a later date this letter was published, the aging John Adams wrote to the aging Jefferson, "Now I see not but you are as good a Christian as Priestley and Lindsey. Piety and morality were the end and object of the Christian according to them and according to you. They believed in the resurrection of Jesus, in his miracles, and in his inspiration, but what inspiration!"

Priestley, who in his American life, was disappointed in so many ways, found in Jefferson a patron and a friend when men of his political views were suspect by the administration of John Adams, another great American who had likewise attended Priestley's services in the early days at Philadelphia.

With the development of religious thought as we now know it to have happened in New England it may seem surprising that Priestley preferred Philadelphia to Boston for his retreat. But the Boston ministers had already attacked Jefferson for his so-called infidelity, and Priestley may have felt that the Quaker city was more likely to provide him with adequate protection. There was also his family to be considered, for persecution at home had made it difficult for his sons to find jobs. Like so many others before and since, they believed that the wide, open spaces of a still undeveloped country would provide the younger generation with those opportunities so sadly denied them at home, and so eventually it was to Northumberland in Pennsylvania that the Priestleys found their way.

Meanwhile a very close connection had been formed between the developing Unitarianism of England and that of Boston through King's Chapel here. The Old Dissent, as typified by Price and Priestley was but one of the channels through which Unitarianism was making its impact on the eighteenth century world. In England at one time Unitarian thought, (and using the term Unitarian to cover Sabellians, Arians, Socinians and all who asserted the supremacy of God the Father), was as strong, if not stronger in the established church. Two names at once spring to mind, those of John Locke and Isaac Newton. Was not the erudite consort of George II, Queen Caroline also suspected of holding such views? The Rev. Samuel Clarke, rector of St. James, Piccadilly, had attempted to reform the Anglican liturgy to bring it into accord with these views. In the middle of the century a growing dislike to the dogmas of the Church led a group of Anglican clergy, among whom was Theophilus Lindsey, Rector of Catterick, to petition Parliament for redress and relief from subscription to the Thirty Nine articles. When the petition was refused, Lindsey resigned his living, moved to London, where in April 1774, he opened a chapel in Essex Street, Strand, openly called Unitarian, though for forty years more Unitarianism was still illegal, where he used a liturgy similar to Clarke's. When in 1887 the Congregation left the site for a new church in Kensington, the buildings were taken over by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and its successor the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches used them as its headquarters until, on the 28th of June 1944, they were destroyed by enemy action.

The liturgy based on that of Samuel Clarke's and improved by Lindsey himself was used with only minor changes until 1793 when

a new edition was published, which, for the first time omitted the Apostles' Creed. The four reasons then given by Lindsey for its rejection were: *firstly*, that it was not written by the Apostles; *secondly*, that professions of faith were out of place in religious services; *thirdly*, that no man or number of men had the power to make creeds for others; and *fourthly*, the imposition of creeds had been the cause of great mischief and was a constant snare to honest minds. It was not omitted because *in itself* it was thought to be untrue.

The events that had taken place here in Boston were independent. We are told by Lindsey's biographer that it was not until 1786 that he heard, presumably for the first time, "that" to quote Belsham, "the principal Episcopalian church in Boston had consented to the introduction of a Liturgy reformed nearly upon the plan of that which had been adopted in Essex Street, and perfectly Unitarian." James Freeman, writing to Lindsey in 1786, told him that he had wished to introduce Lindsey's liturgy entire. "But" wrote Freeman, "the people of the chapel were not ripe for so great a change. Some defects and improprieties I was under the necessity of retaining, for the sake of inducing them to omit the most exceptionable parts of the old services, the Athanasian prayers." Naturally two congregations with similar histories showed interest in each other, and Lindsey's biographer, Thomas Belsham, was consequently inspired to append to his "*Memoirs of Lindsey*" the first full account of the reforms at King's Chapel and the rise and progress of Unitarianism in America. Lindsey's interest having been aroused, he encouraged the spread of Unitarian ideas in the United States by presenting his own and Priestley's works to the library at Harvard. From that time ever since the cause on both sides of the Atlantic have shown deep concern in each other, though it was merely accidental that our two associations were formed at the same time in May 1825.

I think it may be said of English Unitarianism that in the first two decades of last century it had reached, at least in the intellectual field, one of those dry and static periods which perhaps happen in the life of movements as they do of individuals. Priestley, Belsham and their followers had done a great work in clearing away superstitions and bringing rationalism and knowledge to bear on theological problems, but they had failed to create any spirit of religious devotion comparable with that to be found in the Methodist and Evangelical movements. Their adherence to belief in philosophical

necessity had done much to chill their followers, and the new leaders were indeed to create a revolution in Unitarian thought by abandoning it for belief in the freedom of the will.

Into this stagnation, Channing's thought and energy came bringing new life. In his account of the progress and present state of Unitarian churches in America in the 1812 edition of his *Memoirs of Lindsey, Belsham* had spoken both patronisingly and disparagingly of the silence of so many of the Boston ministers on doctrine. "Being myself a friend to ingenuousness and candour," he wrote, "I could wish to see all who are truly Unitarians openly such, and to teach the doctrine of the simple indivisible Unity of God as well as to practise the rites of Unitarian worship. But I will not presume to judge for another." These remarks apparently annoyed the Bostonians for in the second edition (1820) Belsham thought he ought to be more conciliatory and added this as a footnote: "The admirable discourse of the Rev. W. E. Channing, delivered at the ordination of the Rev. Jared Sparks, the respectable minister of the new Unitarian church at Baltimore, in May 1819, and the explicit language used upon that occasion, are amply sufficient to redeem the liberal theologians in America from the censure of concealing what they believe to be true: and the discussion excited by this eloquent address cannot fail to be greatly conducive to the cause of free inquiry and the propagation of Christian knowledge." Belsham himself was too old and too set ever to have been really influenced by Channing, but Channing was now beginning to be read in England, not only by the Unitarians there though it was among these that he made his abiding influence. At the time of Channing's death James Martineau said, "Poor and paltry were it to deny our dependence upon him, and pretend even in relation to our faith that we are above the influence of such authority as his; not to feel it were to be cold to the most earnest wisdom and the most penetrating love. By the Divine right of sanctity and virtue, he was as a master among us." I think it is generally allowed that Martineau was a much greater philosophical thinker than Channing, and without that his thought would have developed in the way it did. Perhaps a more striking example of the American influence is to be found in the life and thought of John Hamilton Thom, a theologian with great moral and spiritual insight. He has told his own story of the impact of Channing's thought on him who had grown up among the dry-as-dust Arian theology of the Ulster Unitarians. At the celebrations of the centenary of Channing's birth he recollected how the light kindled

by Channing had first come to him and set him free for ever. "Nor have I a more vivid recollection," he declared, "than of turning for a moment from weary work to steal a glance at the tract on Milton's Treatise on '*Christian Doctrine*,' which the College-porter had just laid upon my school desk, and of being carried out of myself and my surroundings by its first lofty words."

Channing's influence was of course paramount, and not only in the Unitarian world. In fact on one occasion Sidney Smith, a canon of St. Paul's Cathedral, finding that he must preach on peace avowed that he had simply read Channing, because what he had said was better than anything he could have written. But other American influences closely allied to that of Channings were making themselves felt, and chief among these I would place that of Joseph Tuckerman. His work among the poor in Boston was already known when in 1834, accompanied by Jonathan Phillips, he arrived in Liverpool. Sixty years later Martineau recollected how "their benevolent and devout enthusiasm came upon us like the Angel descending to stir the sleeping waters; and their recital of what was being done to uplift and evangelize the neglected classes in Boston fell as a convicting and converting word, and yet a word of hope and zeal, upon our conscience, and not least on that of Mr. Thom." As a result of this visit similar work to that of Tuckerman's in Boston was started in several of our great cities, and the community centre built round a chapel, which we call a Domestic Mission, is a not unimportant part of the life of the Unitarian churches in England.

Thom had come to Liverpool in 1829, as minister of that Ancient Chapel of Toxeth from which Richard Mather had emigrated almost two centuries earlier, but in 1831 he had been called to the Renshaw Street Chapel, where he remained until 1866 except for an interval of three years between 1854 and 1857 when his place was taken by William Henry Channing. After the lapse of a century his sermons are still readable. They are not great literature in the sense that those of John Donne's are, but they still have an extraordinary power of conviction. In reading them one ceases to be a researcher or a critic, and becomes like the original members of his flock, an admirer always, a follower sometimes. But that generation of Liverpool citizens who first listened to him, were so deeply influenced that they set about reforming and improving their city in accordance with the spirit of duty that had been engendered in the Chapel. Many of the great social and educational reforms that came about in the

course of the following sixty or seventy years can be attributed to men who Sunday after Sunday listened to Thom's eloquence, and tried to make actual in their daily lives the vision that he had seen.

It would be impossible within any time limit to make all conclusive an account of the debt that each side of the Atlantic owes to the other. Your preachers and your hymn writers are part of our inheritance as well as of yours. It is my earnest prayer, that in the years that lie ahead, the ties that exist so strongly between the Unitarians of America and England may ever be more closely woven. We each have much to give and much to receive, and our churches in both countries will be greatly strengthened by an ever greater body of experiences more fully shared.

ANNUAL MEETING 1952

The Fifty-second Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society was held in King's Chapel, Boston, on Saturday morning, May 24th, 1952, at 10:30 o'clock, the President, Dr. Frederick L. Weis, presiding. Dr. Henry Wilder Foote gave the prayer. The Secretary's report of the last annual meeting was read and approved. The report of the Treasurer was read by Miss Doris Harrington for Mr. Dorr, and that of the Auditor was presented by the Rev. Harold G. Arnold. They were accepted and ordered placed on file.

Dr. Bradford E. Gale, chairman of the Nominating Committee, presented the report of that committee, and the officers chosen were elected, the Secretary being instructed to cast one ballot for the names as read. This was done and they were declared elected for the ensuing year. Messrs. Carleton Potter Small and Robert Dale Richardson were then elected directors for the years 1952-1955.

The Reverend Robert Dale Richardson then gave a report of the Unitarian Historical Library, this being the depository of the volumes belonging to this Society.

Following the business meeting, Miss Anne Holt, of Liverpool, for some years the Secretary of the Unitarian Historical Society in England, and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, then read a very interesting and illuminating paper, entitled: Some English Dissenters and their American Friends. After some discussion, the meeting adjourned.

After the meeting, the Society entertained at luncheon Miss Holt, Dr. and Mrs. Eliot, and the officers of the Society at the Union Club.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN HENRY WILSON,
Secretary

*The
Proceedings of the Unitarian
Historical Society*

VOLUME X
PART II

*Unitarianism at Antioch College
1853 - 1953*
David Boynton Parke

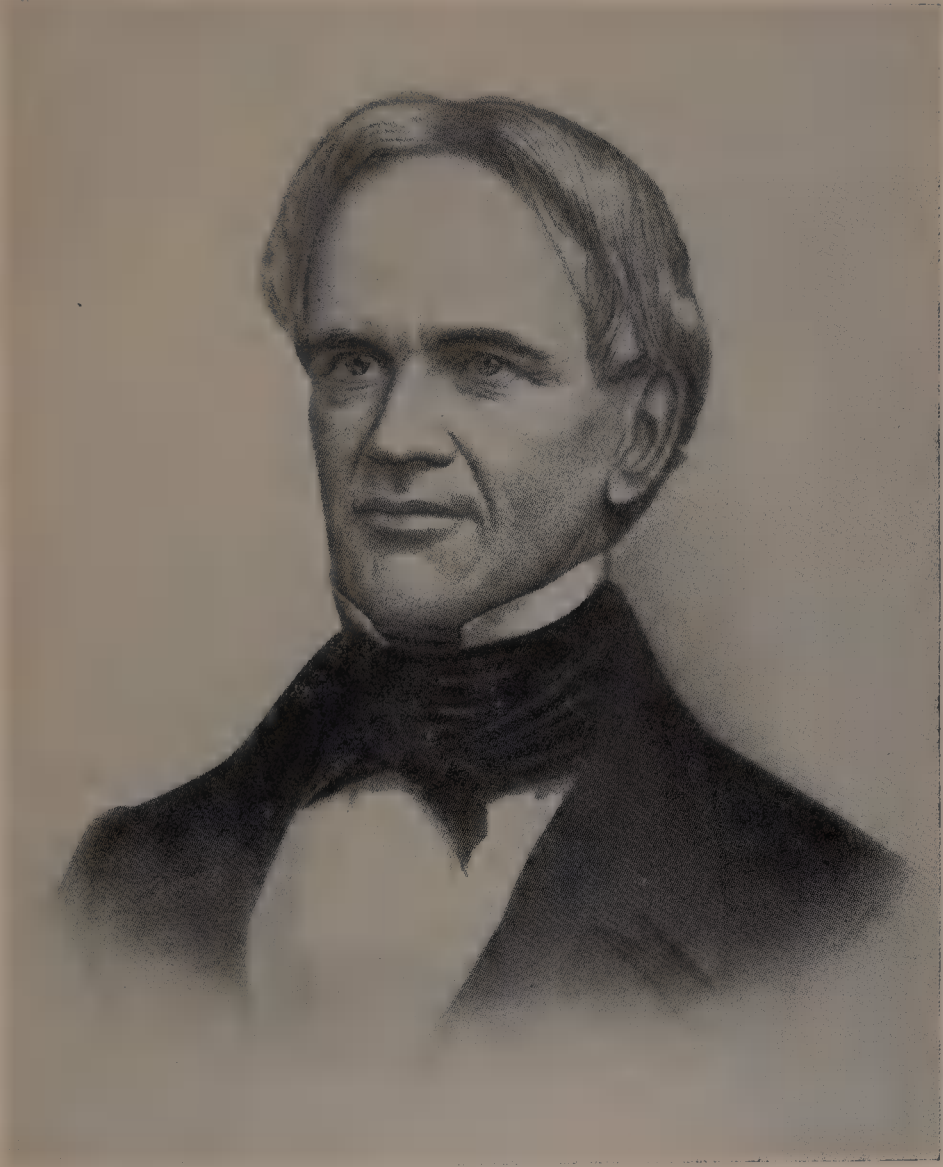
Annual Meeting

List of Officers and Members

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HORACE MANN



ANTIOCH COLLEGE, 1860

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*The Proceedings
of the
Unitarian Historical Society*

Volume X

Part II

1954

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The Unitarian Historical Society

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The Unitarian Historical Society was founded in 1901 to collect and preserve books, pamphlets, periodicals, manuscripts and pictures which describe and illustrate the history of Unitarianism; to stimulate an interest in the preservation of the records of Unitarian churches; and to publish material dealing with the history of individual churches, or of the Unitarian movement as a whole.

The Society welcomes to its membership all who are in sympathy with its aims and work. Persons desiring to join will send the annual membership fee of Two Dollars, with their names and addresses, to the Treasurer, or Fifty Dollars for life membership. Each member receives a copy of the Proceedings. About 125 copies are sent to Libraries.

Unitarianism at Antioch College

DAVID B. PARKE

Exactly one hundred years ago, Horace Mann, educator, lawmaker and religious liberal, became the first president of Antioch College, and this year Antioch celebrates its one hundredth birthday. Mann left his post as secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Public Education—the founder of the American public schools—to lead the small, struggling but liberal and highly promising college in western Ohio. The college had been founded in the same year by leaders of the Christian Connection, a Bible-centered group whose religion spread rapidly in the new West because it required each member to worship God according to Scripture and his conscience only. The Christians had no creed, they had no hierarchy. In these respects they resembled the Unitarians. Horace Mann, a leader in the world of Unitarian ideas, in 1853 became president of the college whose founders were Christians and whose ideals were Unitarian. This is the beginning of the story of Unitarianism at Antioch, which it is my privilege to describe to you today.

Ohio in 1850 was a land in ferment. No longer the “raw, muddy democracy born of the frontier,” Ohio at mid-nineteenth century was growing in population, wealth, industrial power, political consciousness and religious and intellectual vigor. A population of almost two million was engaged in farming and small business, mining and industry. Political parties were strong and active, and by 1850 most of the large religious denominations—Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist—had established themselves, replacing evangelistic “come-outism” as the religion of the Ohio valley. Mid-century Ohio could claim more than twenty colleges and universities, and the state constitution of 1851 was an important step toward establishment of a free public school system.

One of the largest and strongest of the new religious groups which thrived on the freedom of the new West was the Christian Connection, which in 1847 claimed 140,000 members in 1800 churches. This sect began among Methodists in North Carolina, Baptists in Vermont, and Presbyterians in Kentucky at the turn of the nineteenth century. Rejecting traditional dogmas, the Christians combined a fundamental belief in Scripture, a sense of Christian unity, and an insistence on individual interpretation of religious truth. The Christians taught and settled mostly in rural communi-

ties in the Midwest. They were largely farmers and small businessmen. Their motivating impulse was the idea of Christian unity rather than the inspiration and example of any leader.

However, as a new religious movement, the Christians had few theological and cultural roots. According to one Christian historian, "Freedom and revivalism have always characterized the Christians." Their faith made little headway among the intellectuals of Boston and the Eastern seaboard. Their clergy was more zealous than professional. As time passed, the Christians felt increasingly the need for training centers for their ministers and colleges for their young people. They had the greatest religious idea since Jesus' time—the unity of all people in Christian fellowship—but they lacked the intellectual resources to exploit their idea.

Unitarianism in 1850 roughly paralleled Christian thought in rejecting creeds while affirming the goodness of man, freedom of belief and the unique leadership of Jesus. Also both groups were organized on the basis of congregational self-government. But the Unitarians were more vigorous in denying the Trinity, in asserting that Jesus was a man and not a God, and in affirming that the Holy Spirit was an influence and not a person. And most Unitarians believed that truth could be found in sources other than the Scriptures, whereas the Christians was almost entirely Bible-centered. Finally, whereas Christians declared the unity of mankind to be their motivating ideal, Unitarianism had a long history of non-conformity, protest and religious freedom, and Unitarians were anxious to preserve their identity as a unique religious group. As a result, the American Unitarians of the nineteenth century were self-conscious, intellectual, individualistic. They were the heirs of free religion through the centuries and they were proud of their inheritance.

Because of their common values, therefore, and in spite of their differences in tradition, objectives and constituency, the Unitarians and Christians undertook several ambitious educational projects beginning in the eighteen-forties. The Christians needed seminaries for their ministers and colleges for their young people. The Unitarians already controlled a seminary—the Harvard Divinity School in Cam-

bridge—and since 1806 had governed the affairs of Harvard College; but they wanted both a seminary and a college in the West in order to educate ministers and laymen, to supplement the work of the Unitarian churches in the Ohio valley, and to combat orthodox activities.

Meadville Theological School in Pennsylvania was organized in 1844 by Christians and Unitarians together. Its purpose according to one Christian leader was to educate “young men who intend to preach the gospel—not of Calvin, nor of Wesley, but of Jesus.” Meadville’s first students were Christians, but its first president was a Unitarian, the Rev. Rufus P. Stebbins of Leominster, whose conservative theological views appealed to the Christians. Unitarian and Christian co-operation in Western missionary activities, in the Meadville venture, and theological affinity led in the eighteen-forties to a movement to merge the two denominations. “The Christian denomination with its thousand ministers, almost identical in opinion with us, if we will take charge of their theological education, will become one with ourselves,” said a prominent Unitarian, Dr. Henry W. Bellows of New York. But the Christians reacted negatively to the apparent condescension of the Unitarians; one Christian said that his church was “not yet ready to be swallowed alive.” Thus, while many in both denominations favored unification, the effect of the merger movement was to alienate the Christians from Meadville, and the Unitarians not unwillingly found themselves in complete control of the school by 1848. The withdrawal of the Christians meant that they had failed in their first ecumenical effort to unite Christians in one church. To the Unitarians, the Christian withdrawal from Meadville meant a re-affirmation of Unitarian intellectual and liberal religious leadership in the West. By 1850, then, the Unitarians had a Western school, but the Christians had none. From this situation emerged Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio.

The missionary zeal and ecumenical fervor of the Christians led them to believe that their newly-planned college, Antioch (so named because it was in ancient Antioch that Jesus’ disciples first were called Christians), would overnight become a great university. The college was to be non-sec-

tarian, co-educational and ultimately inter-racial. Though Horace Mann is often credited with having instituted these revolutionary features, it was the vision and conviction of the Christian leaders which was initially responsible for them. The Christians set out to raise a half-million dollar endowment for Antioch. They built three large brick buildings of a style similar to that of Washington's Smithsonian Institution. (One fund-raising scheme placed the college in debt almost as soon as it began operation. This was the so-called "perpetual" scholarship plan by which the donor of one hundred dollars could designate a permanent succession of students all of whose expenses were pre-paid by virtue of the gift. However, one hundred dollars barely paid for one student for six months, and the plan was discarded four years later, in 1857.)

Finally, in their ambitious dreams for the new college, the Christians invited Horace Mann, America's leading educator and a member of Congress, to become president of Antioch. When to the dismay of the Christians Mann accepted, the unique character and future prestige of Antioch College was assured.

II

The six years of Horace Mann's presidency—1853 to 1859—were vital, intense and turbulent. Only his strength of character, his idealism and the constant support of his wife Mary prevented Horace Mann's transition to the rugged life of Antioch from resulting in disaster. His moral standards were extraordinarily high, and though never in perfect health, he was indefatigable. A tower of moral and intellectual strength, Mann was adored by his students and most of his colleagues on the faculty. Nevertheless, his years at Antioch were perhaps the most taxing of his lifetime. His difficulties were caused mainly by financial insecurity, the antagonism of certain Christian leaders, and the unfortunate issue of sectarianism in the administration of the college. The story of Unitarianism at Antioch during the college's early years is the story first of Horace Mann and second of the Unitarian ministers who came to its rescue when it was in danger of bankruptcy and collapse.

I do not know for certain whether Horace Mann was or was not a member of a Unitarian Church.* He attended Boston's Warren Street Chapel and the Arlington Street Church sporadically. His admiration for Channing is reflected in a letter to his sister, Lydia B. Mann, in which he wrote: "I take the liberty to send you the last-published sermon of Dr. Channing, which I hope will be read by all the household. Did such views of the Deity as he presents, prevail, the world would be freed at once, from half its crime and its misery." Mann was opposed to religious orthodoxy, ecclesiastical authority and all forms of dogmatism. Many of his friends in Boston were Unitarians, among them Channing and the Unitarian members of the Massachusetts Board of Public Education, Edmund Dwight, Robert Rantoul II and Jared Sparks. The latter two had helped found the American Unitarian Association in 1825. It may be said then that Mann was in fact and in formal affiliation a Unitarian.

Horace Mann was, as all the world knows, a courageous educational innovator and a fighter against slavery. For his great qualities, Mann was from the outset welcomed to Yellow Springs by most of the Christians. However, he was also accused by a few Christian leaders of sectarianism. They charged him with favoring Unitarian students, library books and visiting speakers. His critics accused him of persuading Christian theological students to enter the Unitarian ministry. These few Christians opposed his abolitionist views which, though respectable in enlightened New England, found fewer sympathizers in southern Ohio less than a decade before the Civil War.

The best answer to Horace Mann's critics is found in his own writings. His willingness to go more than half way in meeting the Christians during his first crucial, precedent-setting months of 1853 is evidenced in this description of his reasons for joining the local Christian church: "Last Sunday, Mrs. Mann, Rebecca, [Mann's niece] and I joined the Christian Church. We thought our influence for good over the stu-

*Dr. Herbert Hitchen, formerly of West Newton, reported to the 53rd annual meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society, May 22, 1953, that Horace Mann was a charter member of the First Unitarian Society in Newton, Mass. The Rev. John O. Fisher, the present minister, confirms this report, and the date, 1847-1848.

dents would be increased. We had no ceremony of baptism; we subscribed to no creed. We assented to the Bible for the 'man of our counsel', as it was expressed, with the liberty of interpretation for ourselves; and we acknowledged Christian character to be the only true test of Christian fellowship. This is all . . . I was requested to speak for myself before the church. I said, that, ever since I had known the theological views of the Christian denomination, I had found them to be more coincident with my own than those of any other denomination; that I believed the whole duty of man consisted in knowing and doing the will of God; that I desired to express this belief, and to show my regard for those who held it by uniting with them . . . I was unanimously voted in."

Later, in 1857, he wrote: "When I came [to Antioch], I soon found that I was never among a more sectarian people in my life than no inconsequential number of these were. The whole interest which some of them manifested in the school was, whether I would say their religious hic, haec, hoc after them."

As the locale of Horace Mann's labors, and the only avowedly non-sectarian college west of the Alleghenies, Antioch found many friends within Unitarian ranks, especially among ministers. An additional factor in stimulating Unitarian interest in Antioch was the inability of the Christians to raise enough money for its continuing operation. "A rural people, . . . the Christians lacked experience in financing a great institution." The decline of Christian contributions, therefore, and the failure of the perpetual scholarship plan, called forth unusual Unitarian interest in the college. The Christian Register, the Unitarian weekly, solicited aid for Antioch beginning in December, 1853. Two Unitarian groups made special visits in 1854. After examining "the conditions and prospects of the institution, whose cause he voluntarily advocates," Dr. Bellows of All Souls Church, New York, raised twenty-five thousand dollars for Antioch from among the Unitarians of New York and Brooklyn. Dr. George Washington Hosmer of Buffalo was leader of a second Unitarian examining committee in the Fall of 1854. The group's "lengthy and favorable report on the premises, . . . character and standing of all that appertains to the interest of the

institution" is significant because it was "favorable" in spite of the shaky financial foundation on which the college was developing, and because it records the first of Dr. Hosmer's many services to Antioch, as trustee and later president.

The Unitarian minister who did the most for Antioch during the eighteen-fifties appears to have been President Stebbins of Meadville. Stebbins had sadly watched the Christians and Unitarians move apart in the Meadville venture, and he doubtless wanted to prove to himself and to the two denominations that co-operation would work to their mutual advantage. Having estimated Antioch's debts at \$121,000, therefore, Stebbins took to the road in 1855 to raise twenty-five thousand dollars for Antioch. He solicited in churches between Chicago and Boston, and he raised most of what he sought. From Meadville Stebbins wrote to Horace Mann in 1856, "Our best success here, depends on your success there," and not long after he wrote that "The desperate fight at Thermopylae was nothing compared with your struggle to save Antioch from its debts."

By 1857, in spite of all efforts, it was clear to all that financially, Antioch was a failure. The college had operated for four years on faith, a trickle of funds, a superior student body, a persevering though divided faculty, and on the great moral leadership of its president. What could the college do to escape from its desperate straits?

The solution was found in financial re-organization. In the Spring of 1857, a group of Christians and Unitarians instituted a three-point program by which a new and more experienced board of trustees was elected, the perpetual scholarship plan was discarded in favor of a tuition system, and the college property was assigned to the benefit of creditors. This step saved the college from bankruptcy. But by borrowing to pay off debts, Antioch had only robbed Peter to pay Paul, and would have to reckon again with its indebtedness.

June, 1857 was the occasion of Antioch's first commencement. Twelve men and three women received degrees, and the Eastern Unitarians were well represented by the Rev. Ezra Stiles Gannett of Arlington Street Church, the honored

guest. Externally all seemed well, but three major debts totalling almost eighty thousand dollars still faced the college, and unless help came its collapse was inevitable.

As a consequence of the desperate situation, of mounting Unitarian dissatisfaction with the Christians' conduct of the college, and of Dr. Gannett's report to the officers of the American Unitarian Association, the Unitarians themselves undertook to pay off Antioch's debts. Dr. Bellows, Artemas Carter of Chicago, and others were concerned that a bankrupt Antioch might fall into the hands of Presbyterians or Catholics who would turn it into a center of dogmatic and orthodox learning. For the rescue of the college, therefore, funds were solicited by personal appeal, in parish meetings, public meetings, and through the *Christian Register* and other magazines and newspapers. Bellows, Carter and James Freeman Clarke of Louisville were the leaders of the drive. The following year, 1858, the Unitarian Association first entered the Antioch financial picture by virtue of a loan to help pay off a debt to a Hartford insurance company. The Unitarian efforts brought success. With the help of Dr. Stebbins and other Western Unitarians, the smallest of the three debts was paid off in the summer of 1858. It was a moment of great exultation. Bellows wrote to Mann that the college was "saved." Of the payment of remaining debts he wrote, "I shall move heaven and earth, if necessary, to accomplish this necessary work."

The appeal of Artemas Carter is probably representative of Unitarian motives in the fund drives of 1857 and 1858. Wrote Carter in the *Christian Register*: "Two results will conspicuously follow from our rescuing from indebtedness and continuing to our uses this well-devised institution. First, we shall pour cultivation into the ranks of the 'Christian Connection', where it is much needed, the actual need being somewhat larger than they are conscious of. And second, a college devoted to liberal learning and not connected with the narrow aims of wearing the badge of sectarianism will attract to itself largely of the sons and daughters . . . of that large-minded and liberal class who belong to no denomination and would never educate their children in sectarian institutions." Thus wrote Mr. Artemas Carter of Chicago.

The Unitarians almost succeeded in paying off Antioch's

debts. But even as they did so, the college's expenses during the academic year 1858-1859 were substantial, and far exceeded income, since all large contributions were going toward payment of debts. Horace Mann is reported to have said that Winter that "Internally the establishment goes on beautifully, but already the trump of doom is sounding in our ears and the college is to be offered for sale."

The sale of the college was what Antioch's friends feared the most. Bankruptcy had been postponed by the re-organization of 1857, and foreclosure of the major debts had been prevented by the Unitarian fund drive of 1858. But bills and unpaid salaries piled up, and in April, 1859 the long-dreaded auction of the Antioch property was held in Cincinnati. The dramatic scene of the auction has been celebrated in a play, "A Testament of Faith," written in 1936 by a professor of drama at Antioch. To the relief of the Antioch representatives, Presbyterian and Catholic efforts to purchase the college did not materialize. Horace Mann and a group of Christian and Unitarian friends pooled their personal resources and bought the property for the knockdown sum of forty thousand, two hundred dollars. Truly, Antioch was saved!

Immediately a legally independent board of managers was named to prepare new Articles of Incorporation. Mr. Francis A. Palmer, a wealthy New York Unitarian, gave the college eighteen-thousand dollars by cancelling a debt of that amount. Soon a new Board of Trustees was elected, comprised of twelve Christians and eight Unitarians. A Christian journal editorialized that "The world is almost without a parallel in the disinterestedness of their [that is, the Unitarians'] liberality shown toward the Christians in the final rescue of Antioch College." The Unitarians, by their tenacity to non-sectarian principle, by the unselfish leadership of their ministers, and by virtue of dollars freely given, had given Antioch new life.

Heartened by the events of April and May, 1859, which had assured Antioch's future operation, but fatigued by six years of agonizing toil, Horace Mann delivered one of the great speeches of his life to the graduating class of 1859. Need I repeat his words to this audience? "I beseech you to treasure up unto your hearts these my parting words: Be

ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity!" Horace Mann sought above all an Antioch that would remain true to the principles of free inquiry, religious tolerance and love of truth which were his central moral and intellectual values. It seems astonishing in retrospect that he was at Antioch for only six years. It seems more amazing still that in those six years he was able to maintain his and Antioch's free, adventuresome spirit and build a fine college in spite of all obstacles. His death on August 2, 1859, from a fever marks the end of the first and most heroic chapter in the story of Unitarianism at Antioch.

III

President Mann's death left Antioch without a leader who could rally the varying factions in the college toward new fund-raising and a broader field of service. Antioch's future depended on who was chosen as Mann's successor, for the new leader would, more than any other person or factor, determine the religious and academic orientation of the school.

At least four men, perhaps more, were in the running for the presidency in 1859. They were Eli Fay and Austin Craig, both Christian ministers, and Rufus Stebbins and Henry W. Bellows, both Unitarian ministers. All had worked hard for Antioch under President Mann. There is no evidence of an "opposition" candidate, that is, one who opposed Unitarian membership on the Board of Trustees.

In 1857 Mann favored Dr. Craig for his successor. Apparently the Western Unitarians preferred Dr. Stebbins. By 1859, however, Dr. Bellows was the leading candidate. Even the *Christian Palladium*, a leading Christian weekly, supported Bellows rather than the Christian candidates Fay and Craig. An attractive candidate, Bellows was young, vigorous and closely associated with Mann and Antioch; he was among the leading Unitarian ministers of his time, or for that matter of all time. It was Bellows' very strength which in fact made the members of his New York congregation want to keep him, and which led him to decline the presidency of Antioch.

In declining the presidential office, Bellows persuaded the trustees that the Rev. Thomas Hill, Unitarian minister in Waltham, was the best person for the job. A Harvard graduate,

Hill was a scientist and mathematician as well as a parish minister. Furthermore, he was related to Bellows through his marriage to Ann Foster Bellows, Henry's cousin. Bellows' influence in the appointment of Hill is the more strongly evidenced by the fact that at no time before the summer of 1859 was Hill's name associated with Antioch, whereas other Unitarian ministers were closely identified with the college throughout the period between 1853 and 1859.

Thomas Hill was elected president of Antioch on September 7, 1859, and he undertook his new duties almost immediately. Though primarily a scholar, he enjoyed the work of the parish ministry so much that he had declined the presidency of Meadville in 1855. He showed his enjoyment of parish work by travelling to Cincinnati almost every Sunday morning during his three years as president to preach in the Church of the Redeemer and mingle with its people.

It was in 1861 that the tension between the Christians and Unitarians on the sponsorship of Antioch reached a decisive turning-point. In spite of President Hill's co-operation in the work of the Miami, Ohio, Christian Conference, the relations between the two groups came to be such that co-sponsorship was no longer possible. Continuing co-management would only aggravate the situation. The time for a legal and financial show-down had come.

The legal instrument [and historical symbol] of the show-down was a trustee contract which was signed in June, 1861. The Unitarian-Christian contract of 1861 provided for the withdrawal of whichever denomination could not pay in full the college's debts, and establish in addition a substantial endowment. The Christians had first chance at raising the seventy-six thousand dollars required to release Antioch from debt. If they succeeded, the Unitarians were pledged to "abandon all their legal rights" in the operation of the college. If they failed, the Unitarians could try to raise the funds, and the Christians were pledged to withdraw if they succeeded. President Hill was among the signers, and he worked to raise the funds, first on behalf of the Christians and later for the Unitarians. The Christians had twelve months in which to raise the money, but they could not. Whether because of disillusionment over Antioch's not hav-

ing become "the little Harvard of the West" as they hoped it would, or suspicion of any deals with Unitarians, or downright inability to secure the money from their rural constituency, the Christians failed in their attempt. An additional factor may have been the adverse effects of the Civil War on their efforts to secure contributions and students for the college.

In 1862, at the close of the unsuccessful Christian fund drive, President Hill resigned his post to become president of Harvard College. Hill's three years at Antioch were a holding operation during the administrative and financial readjustments which followed Mann's death. The Christian failure to assume control of Antioch in 1861-1862 left the door open for an all-out Unitarian effort to establish the college. In spite of the War's prior demands for men, materials and money, therefore, the Unitarians went to work to stabilize the finances and operation of Antioch. Their success between 1862 and 1866 was to provide the climax of Unitarian activity at the college.

One fact virtually assured success in the Unitarian drive after 1863. Many of Antioch's Unitarian trustees were also leaders in the regional and national work of the American Unitarian Association. Thomas Hill, George W. Hosmer and Artemas Carter were in the forefront of religious and civic activities in Boston, Buffalo and Chicago, respectively. Furthermore, Rufus Stebbins had in 1862 been elected president of the American Unitarian Association and stood ready to co-operate in every way. Finally, Edward Everett Hale of Boston's South Congregational Church saw in Antioch a cause to which he could devote his great energy and experience. In short, when the Antioch Unitarians appealed for financial help, they appealed to their friends, many of whom knew of Antioch and sympathized with its plan of raising an endowment.

After voting to abolish the sectarian requirement for membership on Antioch's Board of Trustees (in order to strengthen their appeal to Unitarians), the Unitarian trustees organized their drive for seventy-thousand dollars including fifty-thousand dollars endowment. (The trustees also decided at this time to close the college for the school year 1864-1865

because of depletions in students and contributions caused by the War.) The Christian Register in a lead editorial called the endowment drive a "golden opportunity" for Unitarians to "do a great thing for our country." At a meeting of the Unitarian Association in December, 1864, it was voted to raise one hundred thousand dollars for the expenses of the Unitarian Association. Thus Unitarians expressed their readiness to contribute substantially to denominational consolidation and expansion. Also at the December meeting, a committee was named to organize a Unitarian convention in New York the following April, 1865, to be the largest and most representative Unitarian gathering in America's history. The purpose of the convention—named the National Convention of Unitarian Churches—was stated in a letter to the churches in February, 1865: to strengthen "the Liberal Church of America" by raising funds for Unitarian missionary societies, educational institutions, pioneer churches, journals, and "all the enterprises by which the Church has overcome evil." Not less than four members of the organizing "Committee of Ten" to plan the New York convention were past or present Antioch trustees. Chief among them in vitality and influence was Dr. Bellows, who was to be the power behind the convention, a key figure in the Antioch endowment drive, and a longtime Antioch trustee (1856-1859 and 1864-1882).

The convention setting and mood must have been thrilling to experience. After fifteen lean years between 1848 and 1863, during which the net gain in Unitarian parishes was only four out of 205, and during which the Association was often without a missionary secretary, the Unitarians of America faced the future with confidence and hope. A Union victory was assured in the War; the massive convention was the largest in the history of the movement in America, with 385 delegates from almost two hundred churches; the convention host was Dr. Bellows who had become famous as organizer of the United States Sanitary Commission (which became the American Red Cross); the Unitarian Association's one-hundred thousand dollar fund drive for denominational expenses was assured of success; and as a dramatic climax of the preparations, Massachusetts' Governor John A. Andrew was elected president of the convention. The date was April 5, 1865. Unitarianism was ready to march.

The convention acted quickly on matters of education, the most important of which was approving an endowment fund drive for Antioch College. On April 6th, Dr. Hale's resolution was approved. It read "Resolved, That we Regard it of the first importance that the permanent endowment of five professorships in Antioch College, by a subscription of \$100,000, to be completed before its next commencement." Dr. Hale was named chairman of the Committee of Twelve appointed to carry out the resolution.

Thus did the Unitarian churches of America give their blessing to Antioch College, and virtually assure the success of its endowment drive. How had this come about? Doubtless it was the result of a combination of factors. Bellows, Hale, Hill and Hosmer, Carter, Stebbins and the ever-faithful Eli Fay manifested great enthusiasm for their cause, and their enthusiasm was contagious. In addition, Antioch was Horace Mann's college, the school to which the great educator had given the last six years of his life. Mann was one of many Unitarians who had served Antioch as professors, trustees, fund-raisers and friends. To lose Antioch was to sacrifice forever the efforts of these Unitarians. Furthermore, many Unitarian leaders believed that the Christians were incapable of exercising the financial and administrative leadership required to manage an enterprise as large as Antioch. Finally, and perhaps most important, the Unitarian trustees of Antioch considered the 1861 contract a sharp challenge to their denominational pride and resourcefulness. The Christians had failed to build a solid foundation for the college; the Unitarians at the 1865 convention were persuaded that they must not fail in their opportunity.

Between the April convention and Antioch's June commencement—the deadline—only ten weeks remained. One might have expected that Unitarians, having just contributed \$100,000 to the work of the Association, would be reluctant to contribute as much more to the little college in Ohio. But clearly the Unitarian drought had ended with the Civil War; the wealthy were sharing their prosperity with the churches, and those who were not wealthy could contribute more because they earned more, especially in the Northeast where

Unitarians were most numerous. The Christian Register joined Antioch's trustees in pleading for funds. "Other denominations," it declared editorially on April 29, 1865, "do not let such splendid opportunities slip from their hands as this. It cannot be that we can do so suicidal an act as to fail . . . The best interest of the country and of religion would be greatly advanced by a speedy endowment of Antioch."

The rapidity with which the endowment was raised was astonishing. Whereas the Unitarian Association had raised ninety-thousand dollars in the four months between December and April, Antioch's trustees raised cash and pledges totalling more than one-hundred thousand in ten weeks. The Christians had not approached this sum in almost two years of fund raising.

The endowment accomplished two major objectives in the development of Unitarianism at Antioch. First it assured the college's financial stability, and second it formalized—at a crucial point in Antioch's history—the Unitarian interest in the college's sectarian independence. The Antioch endowment had one negative aspect, that being the neglect of the financial requirements of the Unitarian theological schools—Meadville and Harvard—during the years between 1863 and 1866. Not until after "the more urgent case of Antioch College was disposed of" did the Unitarian Association undertake to aid the seminaries at such a financial level.

There is a legend that Edward Everett Hale personally carried the endowment funds to Yellow Springs in the form of large gold pieces. Thirty years ago townspeople who had known Hale accepted this account as factual. I have found no first-hand evidence either to confirm or correct this story. But it seems unlikely that Dr. Hale would have taken the risk involved in carrying thousands of dollars in cash almost a thousand miles by train. Whether transported in cash by distinguished personal messenger or by some other means, we know that the endowment funds were delivered to the trustees at Antioch College in time for their meeting of June 21, 1865.

In his letter accompanying the one-hundred thousand dollar endowment, Dr. Hale set down two conditions on which

the funds were to be used. First, the money should be permanently invested to provide income to maintain five professorships. Second, "whenever and as soon as any clause or article shall be inserted in the Constitution or By-Laws of the College, which may . . . impose any sectarian test for the qualification of Trustees", the endowment would revert to the American Unitarian Association. The Unitarians meant business when they sought funds for a "non-sectarian Antioch", and they established legal guarantees that the college would forfeit the endowment if a sectarian test were ever imposed on the election of trustees.

Also at this June, 1865, meeting of the trustees, the Unitarian trustees revealed their true denominational intentions toward the college. Since the Unitarians had successfully raised the endowment within the specified time, the Christians as a group resigned according to the terms of the 1861 contract. But the Unitarian trustees, having permitted the "letter" of the contract to be fulfilled, re-elected several of the Christian trustees to new terms of office, thus manifesting their wish that Antioch should be under the absolute control of no single religious group. The places of the other trustees were filled by Unitarians. The reconstituted board of trustees now had a membership of thirteen Unitarians and seven Christians.

Not until a year later, in June, 1866, did the Trustees formalize the endowed professorships. The professorships were named after Bellows, Hale and Carter, all of whom had worked to raise the endowment, William Ellery Channing, and George Livermore of Cambridge. Significantly, no Horace Mann professorship was proposed. (Antioch had to wait more than thirty years for any progress toward ■ Horace Mann professorship, and even then—in 1900—the trustees were forced to return the several donations for the Mann endowment "as there is no prospect of the desired sum being raised".) As it turned out, however, the naming of the endowed chairs was little more than a formality, for after 1866 the professorships were seldom referred to by their Unitarian names.

The name of Edward Everett Hale assumed great and lasting importance for the college during the eighteen-sixties.

A prominent minister, author and worker for good causes, Hale as chairman of the National Unitarian Convention's "Committee of Twelve" spearheaded the drive to endow Antioch. His service to the college was unique in another sense: for thirty-four years between 1865 and 1899 Hale served as an Antioch trustee, the longest trustee tenure in the history of the college.

Antioch's president during the difficult years between 1862 and 1866 was the Reverend Austin Craig, a leading Christian minister and scholar, and friend of Horace Mann. One writer has described Craig as "beyond question the greatest man raised up in the [Christian] denomination." As professor of Greek and New Testament and later president of Antioch, Craig provided a continuity of leadership throughout the college's first fifteen years, and was a strong advocate of non-sectarian education.

IV

The year 1866 marked the end of organized Unitarian aid to Antioch. Interest payments on the endowment continued, and Unitarians continued to serve on the board of trustees and faculty. Antioch's president during the relatively peaceful and prosperous years between 1866 and 1873 was the Rev. George Washington Hosmer. Hosmer had concluded thirty years as minister of the First Unitarian Church of Buffalo, and was one of the most respected leaders of American Unitarianism at the time of his election. Hosmer's presidency was characterized by quiet growth; it was, in the words of one writer, a "lull in the struggle" between those who advocated non-sectarianism and those who wished to make Antioch a denominational college. Hosmer's lasting contributions to Antioch included a quality of personal tranquility, substantial scholarship in the history of religions, and the cementing of Antioch's relations with Meadville, which school he served for almost forty years as lecturer in parish administration.

Beyond the service of Unitarian trustees and faculty members, Antioch's Unitarian connection was not strong after the eighteen-sixties. A nominal majority on the board of trustees maintained quiet but effective vigilance over the college's affairs until the turn of the century. Antioch became

a "feeder of Meadville" after 1866 as Bellows had predicted, but the college appears to have "fed" more faculty members than students to the theological school. Included among these, as visiting professors and lecturers, were Dr. Hosmer, Dr. Craig and Dr. George L. Cary, professor of Greek and Latin at Antioch who became president of Meadville in 1891.

In the spirit of Horace Mann's efforts to establish interracial co-operation at Antioch, the Unitarian Association aided Wilberforce University in Wilberforce, Ohio, during the eighteen-eighties by subsidizing courses and lectures by Antioch professors. The most notable statement by Antioch's trustees on the race issue came in 1863 when they "Resolved, that the Trustees of Antioch College, cannot, according to the Charter reject persons on account of their color."

Another aspect of Unitarian aid to Antioch after 1866 was the private bequests made to the college by wealthy New England Unitarians. In 1875 and 1876, Antioch received large bequests from Mrs. Sarah L. King of Taunton and from Jonathan Winn of Woburn, Massachusetts.

The last attempt by the Christian Connection to establish control over Antioch came in the decade between 1883 and 1892 when the Christian Educational Society, an organization of Christian laymen, mostly from Yellow Springs and vicinity, operated the college under the supervision of the trustees. The Christians failed in their efforts to transfer Antioch's endowments to another college because a trustee committee found the non-sectarian conditions of the 1865 endowment "well nigh perfect." The college enjoyed a brief renaissance during the ten years of the Society's operation, with twice as many graduates as previous decades had produced. But Antioch during the eighteen-eighties was beset by administrative frictions and financial mismanagement. In 1892, the Christian Educational Society, which had successfully operated the college but had failed to secure a Christian majority of trustees, withdrew. Three years later, in 1895, the disappointed leaders of the American Christian Convention also withdrew their support. This event marked the final separation of the Christians from the management of Antioch College. As a new generation of trustees and friends of the college came to the fore, the old-time leaders and the denomina-

tional co-operation were forgotten; the relationship between Antioch and Christian groups disappeared; and soon the Christians were urging their young people to attend other colleges.

At this point, on the occasion of the final withdrawal of the Christians from the management of Antioch, we may pause briefly to summarize and appraise the work of both Unitarians and Christians in the life of the college.

The dilemma of non-sectarian for the Christians was this, that in affirming the ecumenical unity of all Christians as their purpose and goal, and in their hospitality to all religious groups in the development of the college's program, some Christians found it impossible to accept non-Christian, and especially Unitarian, contributions of leadership and financial aid in the spirit in which they were offered. Instead, the Unitarian support became, in Christian eyes, a threat to their interest and pride in Antioch. The Christians had established Antioch as a college which would make available to all the religious freedom and Christian hospitality which they had been denied by other churches and colleges. But in order to maintain this freedom and this hospitality, many Christians believed that they would have to control its policies and government. The Christian, in brief, had to maintain their own kind of freedom and—the crux of the situation at Antioch—their own brand of non-sectarianism.

The dilemma of the Unitarians was that in aiding the little, struggling, declaredly non-sectarian college, many Eastern Unitarians gave so much of themselves and their resources to Antioch's cause, and believed so profoundly in Antioch's potentialities for the Unitarian movement, that they overlooked the essentially Christian conception and management of the college, and thereby alienated many Christian friends and supporters. These Unitarians, and Belows and Hale may be numbered among them, came to interpret the privilege of contributing to and co-operating in Antioch's growth, as the right of co-management of all the college's affairs. Thus both the Christian and the Unitarians, on the basis of their similarities and their common interest in Antioch, and in spite of their differences, by 1856 or 1857 saw Antioch as a training ground for their own young people

and clergy, as a cause which their own members could actively support, and as an instrument for their own denominational expansion in the West. The incompatibility of these objectives, barring a merger of the two denominations, was the major source of misunderstanding during the first twelve years of Antioch's existence, and remained a ground for suspicion and mistrust through the nineteenth century.

Between 1892 and 1919 Antioch was one of perhaps thirty small, private colleges in Ohio, all of which offered modest education in the liberal arts, and most of which suffered from financial insecurity. The graduating class of 1910 numbered twenty-two, more than any previous class except that of 1860. New professorships were added and salaries were increased under President Simeon Fess. Fess' departure from Antioch in 1917, on the occasion of his election to the United States Senate, affected the college much as did Horace Mann's death almost sixty years before; it left Antioch without the stabilizing influence, financial contacts and imagination of a strong leader. Both the Christians and the Unitarians had lost interest in the college, and the trustees provided no notable leadership in its affairs. In 1919, Antioch was a small college with a brilliant past and a dark future. What path would the college follow?

Antioch almost became a national Y. M. C. A. college in 1919. In the Spring of that year some leaders of the Young Men's Christian Association proposed that they should raise a half-million dollar endowment and transfer the college to the Y. M. C. A. without, however, changing the non-sectarian requirement of the Unitarian endowment of 1865. The trustees were virtually unanimous in their approval of the plan; they elected a Y. M. C. A. leader president of Antioch and believed they had transferred the government of the college to that organization. But inquiries from Unitarian leaders in Boston, and their own better judgment, caused some of the trustees to examine more closely the Y. M. C. A. proposition. When it became apparent that the Y. M. C. A. men were negotiating on their own, did not have the formal backing of the national movement, and could not raise the endowment as they had predicted earlier, the Antioch trustees rescinded previous actions and accepted the Y. M. C. A. leader's resig-

nation as president. One new path had been explored and found unsatisfactory. Antioch remained unsectarian and independent, but also undistinguished. No one knew it at the time, but less than six weeks later another chapter in Antioch's history, in which Unitarians were to play a central role in the actual re-organization of the college, was to begin with the election of Arthur E. Morgan to Antioch's board of trustees.

V

It appears that the late Dr. Samuel A. Eliot, then president of the American Unitarian Association, first suggested Arthur Morgan for membership on Antioch's board of trustees. In August, 1919, Dr. Eliot wrote to Arthur Morgan: "The failure of the [Y. M. C. A.] movement naturally resulted in the withdrawal of our inquiries, but I did venture to suggest to certain friends that the Unitarian representation on the Board of Trustees might be revived so that whatever interest the Association has in the endowment might be conserved. I suggested [Dr. Eliot continued] that you and the Rev. John Malick, of Cincinnati, might thus be added to the Board of Trustees." At the time of his election, Morgan was chief engineer of the Miami Conservancy District, the multi-million dollar flood control project designed to prevent a recurrence of the 1913 Dayton, Ohio, flood. Arthur Morgan and his wife, Lucy Griscom Morgan, attended the Unitarian Church at Dayton between 1914 and 1918, and in that year Morgan joined the church. Soon after, he was elected president of its board of trustees to direct the search for a minister.

Arthur Morgan is a self-made man. Born and raised by Baptist parents in St. Cloud, Minnesota, he experienced many years of poor health and inadequate eyesight. As he attained physical maturity and self-knowledge during his high school years, he came into contact with liberal ideas through a Unitarian teacher who was the principal of his high school, Miss Dora Wells. A lonesome, sensitive youth, Morgan left his Minnesota home at nineteen to travel and work in the West in an effort to find himself and a vocation. During these years, Morgan often doubted himself; he wrote in his diary, "I would like to know where I belong." Morgan read the Bible and works by Carlyle, Spencer and Hawthorne, studied

botany, and taught school. Of his searching travels, Morgan has written, "When I started for the West at nineteen, I determined never to do a day's work for pay where the normal and natural result of that day's work would not be of human value, and I never quite starved on that program." In addition, Morgan attended some Unitarian churches in the West. He writes, "I separated from orthodoxy more than 20 years before [1919]. In my search for liberal associations, I sought out the Unitarians. [But] my pattern and policies were largely independent of Unitarian influence, except through Emerson, Bryant, etc."

Having been elected president of Antioch by his fellow trustees, one of the first sources to which Morgan turned in raising funds for Antioch in 1919 and 1920 was the American Unitarian Association. Samuel Eliot in his reply to Morgan's inquiry wrote that "it will be a futile task to revive Antioch as a standard small college" and declared that Morgan's plan of work-study education is "exactly in accord with my own thinking on educational matters." But Dr. Eliot discouraged Morgan from expecting financial help from Unitarians, declaring of Antioch that its "name and history . . . are now practically unknown to our fellowship . . . I am sorry I cannot encourage you to believe that any considerable proportion of that money can be raised in or among our churches." The Unitarian Association did contribute two-hundred hymnals to Antioch, but nothing of the substantial aid which Morgan sought.

Thus it was in the realm of Morgan's religious philosophy and as the influence of individual Unitarians in the life of the newly-reorganized college that Unitarianism was manifested at Antioch after 1919. Henry S. Dennison of Framingham, Edwin Gay of the New York Post, and Jerome D. Greene, secretary to President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, were three of many Unitarians who served Antioch as trustees; all were "chosen for personal qualities, not for denominational affiliation," however. In addition, Philip Nash, a New England Unitarian, served as Dean of Antioch from 1921 to 1929.

In the nineteen-twenties, according to Morgan, the intellectual growth of Antioch came more and more to parallel those qualities of Unitarianism which were non-traditionalis-

tic and forward-looking." But Morgan's own religious views became less and less identifiable with the Unitarian church. Morgan was anxious for Unitarianism to be aggressive, "to get in touch with average human beings. I remember constantly feeling that I'd like to build a fire under them—they were living in the clouds." And Arthur Morgan knew whereof he spoke: he was a member of the Unitarian church of Dayton throughout the nineteen-twenties and thirties, and was a vice president of the American Unitarian Association from 1921 to 1928.

Today Arthur Morgan is a leader in the small community movement, and a member of the Society of Friends. Though "it was years after I came to Antioch that I began to have any marked Friends associations," he recalls, the religion of the Quakers had a unique appeal for him. "There were two reasons why I joined the Friends," he says. "First the lack among Unitarians of recognition of emotional as well as intellectual commitment, and second, Mrs. Morgan's associations with, and sympathy for, the Friends." Arthur Morgan reveals himself in personal contact and through his teaching and writings as a man whose religion transcends denominational boundaries, and whose convictions are more humanitarian than theological. The influence of his moral teachings and his philosophy of education for character and life are perhaps his greatest contribution to Antioch. In this respect his role at Antioch has been strikingly similar to that of his predecessor, Horace Mann.

Antioch at mid-twentieth century is a non-denominational college of one thousand students. A unique American institution, it is hospitable to all religious viewpoints but favors none. Many religious philosophies are represented in the faculty and student community. Among the largest groups, proportional to national membership, are the Unitarians and Quakers. In 1951-1952, five per cent of the students and nine per cent of those declaring a religious affiliation were Unitarian. Beyond the work of individual Unitarians in the Antioch and Yellow Springs communities, perhaps the most important single Unitarian contribution today is the annual Billings lectureship, financed by the Billings Fund administered by the American Unitarian Association.

VI

In summary, I believe that the dominant objective and virtually the entire effect of Unitarian aid to Antioch during the college's first century has been to preserve the financial independence of the institution and the non-sectarian character of its charter. In 1853 the *Christian Register* asserted that "Antioch College . . . should receive substantial support [from Unitarians] on the ground that it is the only perfectly liberal and unsectarian institution of its kind the other side of the Alleghenies." In 1857, Dr. Ezra Stiles Gannett wrote to the secretary of the American Unitarian Association after his visit to the college: "Antioch is not a Unitarian college, and should not be made such. . . It can best promote the diffusion of Unitarian sentiment by faithfulness to its unsectarian position." But the final measure of Unitarian intentions toward Antioch lies in the course of action the Unitarians followed. Their official behavior provides the most authentic and conclusive proof that they sought only to aid, and not to control. It seems clear that Antioch, bankrupt and helpless, could have become a Unitarian-owned and Unitarian-operated college in 1859. The fact that the Unitarian leaders chose instead to continue to aid Antioch under the frustrating co-management arrangement with the Christians is powerful evidence that they were interested solely in maintaining an unsectarian and debt-free Antioch. Further evidence of Unitarian fidelity to the principle of non-sectarianism was the re-election by the Unitarians of several Christian trustees at the 1865 meeting. By raising the endowment, the Unitarian trustees had qualified themselves to assume "the exclusive and undivided ownership and control of the college." They chose instead to keep Antioch inter-denominational and non-sectarian. The evidence strongly suggests the conclusion that the Unitarian leaders sought to aid Antioch in its efforts to keep financially strong, denominationally independent, and theologically liberal, and that their purpose was at no time to seize exclusive control over the college's affairs.

The Christians built Antioch; the Unitarians established it. Without Horace Mann Antioch after 1853 might have become just another college. Without the tireless efforts of the

Unitarian ministers and laymen to guide the college through its legal and financial crises in the eighteen-fifties and sixties, Antioch might have become a center of orthodox religious instruction. Without Arthur Morgan's conception of education as life and religion as constant aspiration toward proportion and fullness and excellence, it might not have been possible for him to say what he has said repeatedly, that "religion is at the center of everything we do at Antioch."

Antioch and Unitarianism have helped each other grow for a century. Each is a freer, stronger and more compelling influence on American society for its contact with the other. We may hope that these hundred years are the herald of still greater growth and achievement for liberal education and liberal religion in the coming century.

Annual Meeting, 1953

The Fifty-third Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society was held at King's Chapel, Boston, on May 22nd, 1953, at 10:00 A. M., with President Frederick L. Weis, presiding. After an opening prayer by the Secretary, Mr. Wilson, the reports of committees were given. The Secretary gave his report and Miss Doris Harrington gave that of Mr. Dudley H. Dorr, the Treasurer, who could not be present. The Nominating Committee then presented their list of officers for the coming year, who were voted upon and unanimously elected. The two Directors for three years were the Reverend Dana McLean Greeley, D.D., of Boston, and the Reverend George Huntston Williams, Th.D., of Cambridge. The Reverend Harold Green Arnold was then re-elected Auditor.

The Nominating Committee chosen for 1954 consisted of the Reverend Duncan Howlett of Boston, Chairman, Dr. Clifford Kenyon Shipton of Shirley Center, and Arthur Prentice Rugg, Jr., of Sterling.

Dr. Earl Morse Wilbur, of Berkeley, California, our Honorary Vice-President, was present and spoke for a few moments, and the Reverend Harold Greene Arnold also commented upon the current radio program, "New England's Renaissance."

The speaker of the day was Mr. David B. Parke, of Chicago, Illinois, who presented a most valuable address upon "Unitarian Influence at Antioch College."

The meeting adjourned at noon.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN HENRY WILSON,
Secretary

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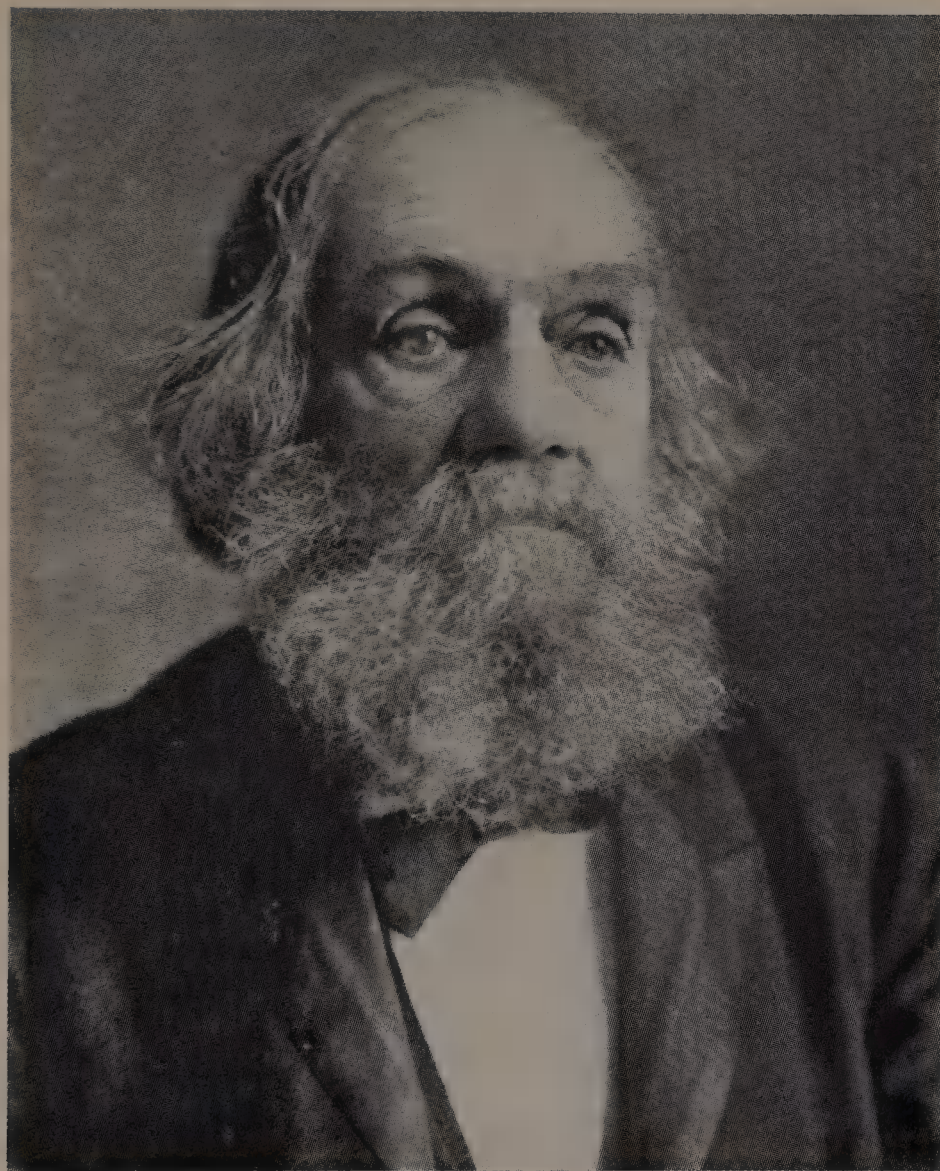
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